

# COUNTRY



## NOTES

AS far as they have gone the elections in Germany have produced a European surprise. The Socialists, who were so confident before the battle, have come out of it with diminished forces and diminished prestige, and this fact is rightly considered as of the very greatest importance by political students in all parts of the world. It means, among other things, that the Emperor William enjoys more popularity in Germany than outsiders are prone to believe. He has himself recognised the compliment paid him by modifying to a considerable degree the law of *lèse majesté*, one of the most peculiar survivals of absolutism in Germany. Yet it can scarcely be said that Prince von Bülow is out of the wood. While the Socialists have sustained a crushing reverse, the Clericals come back in increased strength, so that the Reichstag looks as though it will continue to be commanded from the centre. Somebody has said that whenever the people is poor its voters become discontented and socialistic, but in times of prosperity they naturally incline towards conservatism. The results of the German elections, as far as they have gone, bear out the truth of this doctrine. They will place the Kaiser in a stronger position than he enjoyed before.

One of the most remarkable features of a wave of prosperity is that it seems to surge over the whole of the civilised world at once. We have commented on the most satisfactory financial returns of this country for last year. The United States has also had an era of unexampled prosperity, Canada has never been so prosperous as she is at the present moment, and now Mr. Deakin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, gives us figures to show that Australia is keeping step with the rest of the world. Since 1900 there has been an increase of £24,000,000 in State trade, which he traces to federation, but in the total exports and total imports we find a corresponding increase. The great items that show increases in the exports are products which are largely disposed of in this country. Butter is one of the most important of them, but wheat, flour and wool are very little behind it, while the gold export in 1906 showed an increase of close upon £6,000,000 over that in 1905. These are facts that will give pleasure to all who have the prosperity of our Colonies at heart.

Mr. Haldane's address as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University has now been published in the form of a pamphlet, and deserves more than passing attention. It is an address well worthy of the attention of the whole nation, but particularly of the young men who are preparing to enter upon a career in life. In a time of prosperity, such as we are enjoying, the temptation is to take things easily, to seek enjoyment or, what still oftener happens, to seek distinction in skill at some game or pastime. Now, if we read Mr. Haldane aright, his argument is that even from the point of view of the man who wishes to obtain the greatest amount of pleasure and interest out of life, the better course is to dedicate himself to some calling. Research was the keynote of the address, and it will be found on examination that research is, in very truth, the substantial thing in any great calling. Even in the case of the artist the object is to find out something that has not been done before and to do it, and in the professions of medicine, law and the rest, without research the highest success is impossible.

Mr. Haldane touched with a light but sure hand on the inspiration which religion gave in the past, but it would be idle to deny that to many its voice has now become dumb. He repeated the story of Lessing, who declared that if God were to offer him truth in one hand and research for truth in the other he would choose research. Its meaning is that truth never stands still, and therefore the mind of the seeker after it never can stand still. Mr. Haldane further advised the young student to seek it for himself and then to follow the old command, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," and he concluded his address with a quotation from the New Testament meant to comfort those who fail in this high endeavour. This quotation was specially noteworthy as showing the immeasurable wisdom

that lies behind these old sayings, and has commended them even to the minds of those who do not accept the dogmas of religion as they were accepted by our forefathers.

The speech which Mr. Haldane made at the annual meeting of the British Science Guild ought to be read with great satisfaction by those who live by what William Cobbett used to call "antelluct." Among his statements was one that brains had to-day a better market than they had had for a long time past in Great Britain. His argument was that during the last three or four years there had been a great searching of hearts, and many of our leaders of industry had come to the conclusion that Britain stood in great need of waking up. Many of our methods and much of our machinery had become antiquated; but Mr. Haldane thinks that the intelligent foreigner has been greatly impressed of late with the zeal and energy with which attempts have been made to rectify these deficiencies. The country has become so accustomed to being scolded for its general lethargy and stupidity that this encouraging speech by Mr. Haldane should break upon it like a gleam of sunshine seen through clouds.

Many of our readers will be glad to be reminded that during the coming Session of Parliament an energetic endeavour will be made to get the Public Health Acts (Building Bye-laws) Bill passed through the House. Under the skilful and unwearying pilotage of Lord Hilton it got through the House of Lords last year, and at an interview between the president of the Building Bye-laws Association, the chairman of the council and the honorary secretary, Mr. Burns expressed himself anxious that the Bill should pass into the Statute Book, and when it was introduced into the House he gave his approval to it, so that during the Session the Bill ought to stand a fair chance of becoming law. But members of the association can still help forward that consummation if they will take a little trouble. The best way is to induce District Councils to pass resolutions in its support. If those who have the improvement of all rural buildings at heart will only exert themselves sufficiently they may accomplish a useful and much-needed reform.

### VIA DOLOROSA.

Hand in hand we wandered by ways we knew not,  
Stumbling footsore over the stony places,  
Hope and I, in quest of a golden city  
Dearer than dreams are.

Sombre storm-clouds blotted the starless heaven,  
Wind-lashed raindrops stung our defenceless faces;  
So we came to the Valley of Desolation,  
Leading no-whither.

Then I wept; but Hope laughed low in the darkness,  
Whispering: "I hear the herald of morning;  
Look!"—And through my tears I looked, and before us  
Lo, El Dorado!

ANGELA GORDON.

Farmers are complaining bitterly of the plague of wood-pigeons in many parts of the country. But let them take heart; close on the heels of the evil, in Hampshire and Norfolk at any rate, has come the cure. On one shoot in the neighbourhood of the New Forest a disease is playing such havoc that many birds are either lying dead or can in many instances be knocked down with a stick or caught by hand; when picked up and examined they are found to be covered with a yellow growth and wasted to skin and bone, their necks feeling quite soft when pinched. On one Hampshire shoot there is a belief that the disease is confined to the smaller migratory pigeons which have been attracted thither by the plentiful acorn crop, and that the native birds are not suffering to anything like the same extent. However, we shall be surprised if this turns out to be the case, as this disease is well known on estates with oak woods, where it is called the acorn disease, from the fact that it appears in most years after the acorn crop has been unusually heavy. It does not appear to leave any permanent bad results behind it, which would be a pity, considering how much sport the pigeon gives; but it is safe to assume that pigeon-pie will be at a heavy discount for the next few months.

The Admiralty report on the trials of the apparatus of the American Submarine Signal Company confirms the theory that the submarine bell is an indispensable adjunct to Light-ships. Fog-signals cannot under some conditions be heard at a distance of even one mile, and the value of the submarine bell is shown by stating the proved fact that it increases the range at which a fog-signal can be heard to the approximate range of a Light ship's light in clear weather. The facility of determining the direction of the sound, either with the help of receivers fitted on a vessel or by observations below the water-line, is another great

point in favour of the system. It is the more remarkable that it has not been introduced into use by Great Britain, as the Navy would gain thereby as much as the merchant service, for it is of the greatest importance that men-of-war should be able to navigate the coasts with speed and certainty in thick weather; the fate of the Montagu bears witness to the difficulty of so doing in the present conditions.

At the last meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S., called attention to the fact that there were only two regular nesting-places of the spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) now remaining in Holland—one the Naarder Meer, close to Amsterdam and the other near Helder. Of these, the first was offered for sale last year, and had it gone into the market it would probably have been "reclaimed." Fortunately, however, it has been saved from such a sad fate by the patriotic efforts of the Society for the Preservation of Natural Monuments in Amsterdam, which has purchased the Naarder Meer, in order to preserve it in its present "unreclaimed" condition as a breeding-place for spoonbills and other aquatic birds. This is good news indeed; and we take it that steps are being taken by the society to protect these birds from greedy egg-collectors during the breeding season.

At this same meeting Major F. W. Proctor exhibited three sets of eggs of the solitary sandpiper (*Totanus solitarius*), which had been taken by Mr. Evan Thompson in Northern Alberta, North-West Canada. The solitary sandpiper, it appears, like its European relatives the green and wood sandpipers, has adopted the practice of depositing its eggs in the deserted nests of other birds at some distance from the ground. One clutch numbered as many as five eggs, and was taken from an old nest of the American robin (*Turdus migratorius*). Another incomplete set of two eggs was taken from the nest of Brewer's blackbird (*Scolecophagus cyanocephalus*) placed in a tamarac tree 5ft. from the ground. The third clutch of four eggs was also taken from an American robin's nest 15ft. from the ground. It would seem that occasionally the sandpiper is indiscreet or unobservant enough to place its eggs in newly-made nests, whence, as a consequence, they are promptly ejected. Another interesting fact brought to light by Mr. Evans is that occasionally this bird appears to find these ready-made nurseries not quite to its liking, inasmuch as on one occasion he found one had been reinforced by a lining of lichen.

The eggs of this bird are extremely rare. Up to the present apparently only nine clutches have been obtained, and these have been found in nests of American robins, Brewer's blackbird, Canada jay, and cedar waxwing. The solitary sandpiper has chosen a breeding-ground sufficiently inhospitable to secure it from any frequent molestation, since it appears to nest only in the "muskegs" of North-West Canada (Alberta)—swampy woods, where the soil at about 1ft. or 18in. below the surface is solid ice, which does not melt till the middle of June or later, when the whole region becomes impassable. But to make assurance doubly sure this wary bird invariably selects a tree containing a nest with an open outlook, and always situated on the outskirts of the forest, so that it can easily fly off when approached.

Alpine scenery has already been so much spoiled by railways and roads that the proposal to build a railway up the Matterhorn, which has as yet escaped the indignities heaped upon lesser peaks, will be regarded with horror in this country. The ingenuity of the scheme is terrible. The proposed line is to run from Zermatt, up the valley, across the Zmutt by a bridge and *via* the Schwarzsee and the Hörnli as far as the Matterhorn hut. From the hut passengers will ascend in a lift to an elegantly appointed shelter some 60ft. below the final crest. The fare is to be 50fr. and the journey is to take less than two hours; but the concession for the construction of the line has not yet been granted, so that it is premature to think of such details. In the meantime, the scheme is opposed by those most concerned—the guides and dwellers in the Zermatt commune, and by all those who know what the beauty of Switzerland is and how easily it may be ruined.

M. Maurice Maeterlinck, the well-known Belgian writer, has just acquired a very attractive property, the Abbey of St. Wandrille near Caudebec-sur-Seine in Normandy. On October 28th, 1905, we published an illustrated article on this fine old place. St. Wandrille, according to tradition, was a cousin of Pepin, a Prince of the Franks, and was born about the year 572. The original name of the Abbey which he founded was Fontenelle. In the ninth century it was destroyed by the Norse pirates, and for more than a century it lay in ruins, grown over with forest trees, a few stones only remaining to show where the old building stood. However, the hope of rebuilding it never was lost, and the work was commenced in 1012, only to be once again destroyed, this time by a terrible thunder-storm. The Abbey was once more rebuilt, but in 1250 was again reduced to ruins, this

time by a fire. A beautiful Gothic church was reared on the site. The Abbey was finally closed in 1791, when it was turned into a factory, but in 1863 it passed into the possession of the Marquis of Stacpoole, who, after carrying out a considerable amount of restoration, sold it to the Benedictines. When the new Associations Law was passed its monastic life ceased. Such is the home that M. Maeterlinck has acquired, and if beautiful remains and old associations help to inspire him, we ought to receive some worthy fruit of his genius from there.

With the death of Sir Michael Foster a man of the very highest scientific attainments is removed. His life-work lay in the region of physics. He began life by practising at Huntingdon as a surgeon from 1860 to 1866, and in 1867 he became demonstrator of practical physiology at University College, London, two years later being appointed professor. In 1899 he was President of the British Association, and was returned as representative in Parliament of London University in succession to Sir John Lubbock. When the split between Free Traders and Fiscal Reformers took place he refused to join the party of Mr. Chamberlain, and as a Liberal was defeated in the General Election of last year by Sir Philip Magnus, by the narrow majority of twenty-four votes. To many of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE he must be known chiefly by his hobby or pastime, which was gardening. He was a great cultivator of the iris, and on this subject contributed several articles to our contemporary the *Garden*.

#### THE TITS' LARDER.

At the window where I sit  
Hangs a never-failing shell;  
Here's a roguish little tit—  
Come to find a dainty bit  
Winter's hunger-pangs to quell  
At the window where I sit.  
Is he bashful?—Not a whit!—  
Punctual to the breakfast-bell  
Here's a roguish little tit!  
Round his larder see him flit,  
Knowing peace and plenty dwell  
At the window where I sit!  
Plainly in his eye is writ  
"More to-morrow!—thank you well!"—  
Here's a roguish little tit!  
On the morrow, looking fit  
And more saucy, truth to tell?  
At the window where I sit  
Here's a roguish little tit!

EDWARD F. SHEPHERD.

The world of chess is exceedingly excited just now about the match for the world's championship which is being played by Dr. Lasker, the present holder of the title, against Mr. Marshall, the talented young American who has sprung into fame within the last few years. It is more than a decade since the previous encounter took place, when Dr. Lasker wrested the honour from Mr. Steinitz, and we can scarcely believe that the present battle can possibly be as important as those that have gone before. Mr. Marshall is a bright and ingenious player, but he does not carry the weight of one or two of the great Continental exponents of the game. Dr. Tarrasch at his best would probably have had a chance of winning against the present champion, and so would one or two others who can be named, but against the exact calculating play of Dr. Lasker the fireworks of Mr. Marshall have, in our opinion, little chance of succeeding.

On another page will be found some interesting directions issued by Professor Bottomley to those who are making experiments in soil inoculation. A considerable number of years has now passed since it was discovered that the tubercles of leguminous plants abstracted nitrogen from the air, and it was perhaps natural that a long time should elapse before commercial use should have been made of this knowledge. It must be confessed that we in England were somewhat slack over the matter. The Germans were the first to study what practical use could be made of the discovery, and it was America that succeeded. A scientific student was sent over to Germany for the purpose. He spent about twelve months in a laboratory and came back knowing all that the Germans did. At first it did not seem to him likely that there was much commercial value in the matter; but the American Department of Agriculture, with characteristic enterprise, fitted him out a laboratory and gave him an assistant or two at a total cost amounting to something like £1,000 a year, and the consequence was that a means was found of making this characteristic of leguminous plants of practical avail in the



cultivation of the soil. The process may be easily ascertained by reading Professor Bottomley's directions.

The Earl of Dudley is to be congratulated on the find of coal that has been made on his Baggeridge estate, but the geologists are entitled to even more credit. Professor Lapworth long ago predicted that coal would be found under the sandstone rocks to the west of the South Staffordshire coalfield, so the search for it was begun ten years ago. Serious discouragement was experienced when, after sinking about 40yds., a huge feeder of water was encountered. This gave off a volume of not less than 60,000gal. an hour, and not until the men had worked night and day for three years was it disposed of. The result is, therefore, a triumph for science. It is believed that the output will be something like 3,000 tons, which should mean employment for between 1,500 and 1,600 men. As bands of iron ore have been discovered in the immediate vicinity of the scene, other possibilities are opened up.

Mr. David Macbrayne, whose death occurred the other day, may be said to have divided the honours with Sir Walter Scott of opening up Scotland to the tourist. But while Scott stimulated the intellect and imagination of the Southerners, David Macbrayne found steamers in which they could make their excursions. In his early years he was associated with the Messrs. Hutchinson; but on the retirement of Mr. David Hutchinson in 1876, and of his brother two years later, Mr. Macbrayne became the sole partner. Since then the fleet has been nearly doubled in numbers, and more than doubled in tonnage. In 1902, when he was approaching the ninetieth year of his life, he thought it time to take two of his sons into partnership, and in 1905 the firm was converted into a limited liability company with one of his sons as managing director. During all those fourscore and ten years Mr. Macbrayne was engaged in the agreeable task of providing accommodation for tourists among the Western Islands of Scotland, and was a man of a great energy and vigour, which was chiefly concentrated on his private business. He took no important part in public affairs.

## A NIGHT WITH THE MANX SHEARWATERS.

THE evening of June 3rd was one to be remembered. It was one of those delightful summer nights for which the Scillies are famous. Wind there was none, and consequently the placid sea was like a huge mirror but for the slight Atlantic heave, which even on a night like this is seldom entirely absent. Two bird-lovers on St. Mary's had been waiting for such a night as this, for they were bent upon an excursion which required the finest weather. They had long desired to spend a night on one of the outlying bird islands, and particularly on Annet, the home of the Manx shearwater, and at last the chance had come. Annet lies some three miles south-west of St. Mary's, and half a mile west of St. Agnes. On such a calm evening as this sailing was out of the question, so a boatman was procured to row us to St. Agnes, where another man was found who should take us across Smith's Sound to the thrift-bedecked Island of Annet.

As we could not sail, progress was of course slow under oars, but even at the early hour of seven, while we were crossing St. Mary's Sound, hundreds of shearwaters were circling around our boat. Their flight is very rapid, and the curves which they make as they swiftly skim the water are most graceful. Sometimes they came within a few feet of us, and we were able to



C. J. King. AT MOUTH OF NESTING-HOLE.

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watch them very closely. Indeed my friend, Mr. F. W. Frohawk, who is a distinguished bird-artist, made some rapid sketches, one of which was most successful in showing the bird in a most realistic attitude, with wings fully extended as it skimmed within a few inches of the water. On this particular evening, though there was a large number of the birds about, they were not nearly so numerous as I have seen them, for at times they must number many thousands.

And here in passing I would mention an incident which happened in this same sound two summers ago. A gentleman, an enthusiastic fisherman, who spends a long holiday in Scilly every year, was fishing in St. Mary's Sound one evening, when he felt a very strong bite. As soon as he commenced to haul in his line he was able to tell that the fish (?) was something out of the common; but judge of his surprise on landing it to find that it was a Manx shearwater. As he was fishing for pollack at the time, an idea may be had of the depth at which the bird was diving. Though the shearwater is not generally looked upon as a diver, this incident shows conclusively of what it is capable in this way. We landed on Annet that night just as the sun was sinking into what looked like a sea of blood. Not a cloud could we see, not a breath of air could we feel—a perfect night for



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THE BIRDS' BURROWS AMONG SEA-PINKS ON ANNET.

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sleeping out. Sleeping, indeed!—there was no sleep for us. Even had the continued interest in what was going on all around us been insufficient to keep us awake, the incessant noise of all those thousands of birds (and my friend Mr. F. estimated them at 150,000) would have been enough to prevent any ordinary individual from resting. Immediately on landing, after selecting a spot where we could make ourselves comfortable in case of a change in the weather, we proceeded to the far end of the island,



C. J. King.

CLIMBING THE ROCK.

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facing that part of the ocean in which the sun had gone down, in order that we might observe the movements of the puffins, which in this particular quarter are simply swarming. Here, during the winter gales, the sandy banks above the rocks and boulders are constantly washed by the sea and salt spray, and are consequently quite barren, but honeycombed by the birds. A favourable position was selected for watching, so long as the light would permit, and to our surprise we found that instead of all the birds (I am speaking of puffins) coming home at night, there were quite as many leaving their holes and going to sea right up to the time when darkness made it no longer possible for us to observe them with certainty. As we lay upon the earth and kept very quiet, surrounded as we were by puffins' holes, we were able to see very well till 9.40 p.m., and right up to that time puffins were going and coming just as in the daytime. We now made our way to our resting-place, which was right in the centre of the shearwater colony. At 10 p.m., almost to the minute, these birds began to come out after their long vigil underground, and in a few minutes they were rushing about in all directions. It may be necessary to explain that, like the puffin, the shearwater has some difficulty in taking flight from the ground, seemingly not having the power to rise without a considerable amount of running and flapping of wings. Imagine then what it was like when this was being done all around us by hundreds of birds, or, I might safely say, thousands. Just in front of where we sat was a rock somewhat conical in shape, and as during the whole night it was never quite dark, we were able to see bird after bird run up this rock in order to get a better elevation for starting, and then take flight. The first one we took to be a rat, but were soon undeceived when we saw it spread its wings. In half-an-hour (10.30) the air was alive with shearwaters, and the din was deafening. The peculiar cry of this bird is unlike that of any other, and is well described by its local name "cock-a-thor-don," the third syllable being particularly emphasised. It is generally repeated, and when made so close to one that the wind from the bird's wings actually fans one's face, as was the case many times that night, and by thousands of birds, the effect may be safely

left to the imagination of the reader. Babel, I should think, was comparatively quiet to it.

There seems always to have been a considerable amount of speculation as to the movements of these birds during the night; but from what we were able to observe, I am convinced that between the hours of 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. a change of watch takes place; those birds which have spent the previous day in the nest come out and change places with those which have been at sea all day, and during these hours in the dead of night they hold a sort of fraternising gambol before the home-comers take to their subterranean abodes and the others go away to sea. At 2 a.m., once more, almost to the minute, the noise ceased and every bird disappeared. But it is only by passing the night among them that one can really learn much about their habits on shore, for all day long they remain in their holes, in most instances several feet from the entrance and quite beyond observation. For many years I had spent much time in trying to procure photographic records, but, with one exception, without success. My mode of operation has been to go from hole to hole and listen. This generally results in finding a burrow in which a bird can be heard. The only thing then to be done is to wait with as much patience as one can muster for the chance of a sight of the bird. In nine cases out of ten the long vigil is useless, as they seldom show themselves; but occasionally a bird comes to the mouth of the hole and will sit there quietly for a considerable time, quite careless of the fact of one's presence. In this way I have secured what I believe is an unique photograph (here reproduced). On one occasion I found a hole in which there were evidently two birds. After a wait of some hours both of them came to the entrance, but though I had several shots at them the resulting negatives were of little use, owing to the jumbled appearance of the birds. The daylight seemed to have completely dazed them, and they looked like a mass of wings and feathers. I mention this just to show the disappointments one has to contend with when making photographic records of these particular birds. And yet a well-known bird photographer says that sea-bird photography



C. J. King. POISED FOR A "TAKE-OFF."

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is quite easy, and he calls it "the battue of the camera-hunter." Sometimes, however, one gets a chance by sheer luck, which no amount of stalking and patience can secure, and the three pictures here shown of a shearwater in three positions on a rock are an example. Just after sunrise on the morning following our night's vigil I procured these three in quick succession, with the bird on the same conical rock which I have mentioned earlier in these notes.





C. J. King. *THE PAUSE BEFORE FLIGHT.* Copyright.

I cannot conclude without referring to the lovely sight which Annet presented for an hour or so after sunrise. Many people have admired the beauties of this romantic island in the nesting season, when it is teeming with bird-life and bedecked with countless millions of the flowers of the thrift, but never before had I seen it at this early hour of the morning with the dew upon the flowers. This added to its charms in a marvellous way, as if during the darkness some unseen power had sprinkled every flower with diamonds, which glittered and scintillated in the sunshine from every blossom in all that fifty acres of sea-pinks! I am very doubtful if any sight on earth's fair surface can excel that of Annet during the early hours of a fine summer morning.

C. J. KING.

### *AUTOLYCUS, 1900. A. D.*

"COME out, then, all you lazy wimmin-folk. Come out ye wold maids an' show your pinched-up cherry-topped noses. Come out you buxom mothers o' twenty. An' all you pretty maidens in your bloom, come out, me sweet little dears. Here we be again. Here he comes, the very masterpiece of a young man."

They all ran out. At every lilac-sheltered garden-hatch and at every open doorway down the village street stood one, or two, or it may be a little group. They popped out as they were, in aprons and with sleeves rolled up. They would have come for less. But there was always an excitement when Silas Pickford passed on his rounds through the parish of Brittleford. An outlandish place of dwindling population this Brittleford, where nothing ever happened. So people were glad of any diversion. And although the elder folk when they heard Silas halloo might tap on their own spacious foreheads and declare with mystery that there was "something not quite right for certain sure, there—there"—an imputation often thrown at people of genius—every woman supported Silas, and would pour awry out of a chipped spout and grumble for weeks rather than lay out sixpence for a teapot at the shop in the market-town. Besides, Silas was always a penny more reasonable than the shop, and more than that might be beaten down. For Silas, mind, was to be trusted to sell if he anyways could.

"Come out, come out, come out! Here he is again."

Never, surely, was another such a loud, raucous voice, and it had none of the leisurely, undulating drawl of our dialect. It could be heard far away in the landscape; and Silas always began to shout from the hill, as soon as he had turned the bend and

alighted to lead his pony safely over the rolling stones down the steep knap. There were some who called Silas a gipsy, but that was a mistake. He was born in a little old-world seaport some fifteen miles from Brittleford, the son of that most versatile of all merchants, a marine-store dealer. Yet his appearance somewhat favoured the inference. When at last he reached the village street, we saw a sharp-featured, clean-faced little man, with black hair and rings in his ears. Around his throat was a blue neckerchief with white spots, in a knot as tight as a hangman's. He wore a long sleeve-waistcoat, with flapped pockets and a slit over each hip. It had more than a score of buttons, of which about a dozen at the bottom had never made acquaintance with a button-hole. His little bow-legs gave him a horsey appearance, for his breeches were tight, and so were his gaiters also. His two-wheeled cart was piled high with pots, pans, brushes, crockery and all sorts of wares. The harness glistened with brass fittings. The shafts rose in the air, and the bellyband threatened to lift the little pony off his legs. And sometimes along the roadside, but more often over the hedge, ran a brindled lurcher dog that came and laid down under the cart whenever Silas stopped in the village.

We knew that Silas was a bit of a rogue, but we liked him none the worse for that. He did not take us in. We only winked at each other in proof that his oddities did not pass unnoticed and said he was "a funny customer." We agreed that "a man mus' get up pretty early in the mornen to get upzides wi' Silas." But as all Brittleford jumped out of bed at the first streak of dawn, we were not disqualified on the ground of late rising. And if it were whispered with a wise shake of the head, "Ah! Silas do know what to do wi' a hare or a pheasant, an' where to place a nest or two of aggs in the spring," what business was that of simple cottagers like ourselves? No! Gentry must look after their own game. Such things did not come our way except by chance, and no doubt they deal in a great many different sorts of articles at a marine-store. He knew everybody by name and had a word for young and old. He said nothing in recommendation of his wares, but shouted nonsense at the top of his voice to show he was there.

"Here he is once more. The young crown-prince of licensed hawkers, the wonder of the age, with his remarkable performing pony, once a race'orse, but now brought into the true fold, 'aving seen the error of his ways and taken to the paths of industry. Look at 'im, ladies and gentlemen. Look at 'im. A 'orse that an archbishop could warrant sound. A 'orse that has said his prayers on the 'igh road with nobody nigh to see him but his master. A remarkable 'orse, ladies and gentlemen, that will eat oats out of a nose-bag as often as the oats are there, but not otherwise. And more than that, a 'orse that goes in a cart that runs on wheels—Good morning, Mrs. John Brooke. How is Mrs. John Brooke? I hope I see you well, ma'am, with both hands out of sight under your apron, because you hold coppers between your finger and thumb, but do not wish to look proud. What is it for you, ma'am? A small bucket to carry the kitchen-stuff to the pig's-meat barrel? What, you don't keep a pig? Don't mention it, ma'am. I would sell you the bucket all the same. Eh! A 'amel wash-up basin sevenpenny size? A 'amel wash-up basin sevenpenny size for Mrs. John Brooke. I commend the choice, but make it ninepenny, ma'am. No? Sold again. Sold again and got the money."

There was no secrecy in our dealings with Silas Pickford. To hasten and stimulate loitering customers he announced the nature of every purchase and the price in his loudest voice. We gathered round to carefully examine Mrs. John Brooke's wash-up basin and to look for flaws in the enamel. The verdict was favourable. Each one pronounced it "A very tidy wash-up basin, I do call."

For the larger wares which Silas did not habitually carry in his cart it was only necessary to give the order and wait until the next journey. He was the universal provider for Brittleford, but then our wants were few and simple in the extreme.

"Mother send I out to tell 'ee to bring on a bread-pan, for ours is a-brokt." Priscilla Courtney brought the message, the prettiest maid in our parish, with her black head in a crimson Tam o' Shanter, her sleeves tucked up to her elbows, and a red pinny straight from her neck to her skirt. She had reached the merry giggling age, was "sweetheart high" and yet "heart-whole," for she walked up and down the street of an evening arm in arm with another girl, and they laughed and talked to the youths in company, with one eye on the miller's lad, and another on the cottage door to see if her mother should chance to pop out.

"Sold again! This day three weeks at the same hour of the clock. A glazed bread-pan for Mrs. Courtney. And what for you, my tulip? What do you want for yourself? Here's a brooch of gold in a true-love knot eighteen pence, or say one an' four, to wear when you walk out with your sweetheart; and a maid with such a brooch under her chin is as sure of kissing as—"

"Get out wi' your stuff," giggled Priscilla. "I na'n't a-got na'ar a sweetheart—not eet."

"Sold again!" shouted Silas. "Sold again—this day three weeks a sweetheart for Priscilla Courtney. I'll bring him with the bread-pan. A fine young man—a young man of quality, equal to myself, who drives his carriage and——"

"I shan't have 'un if I don't choose," interrupted Priscilla, with a toss of the head.

"Leave the choice to me, Priscilla. What I bring I guarantee. As sure as the light, this day three weeks, a sweetheart you shall have. One that'll wear, Priscilla. A fine young man—a masterpiece, such as myself."

"Oh, to be sure, there can't be no harm to bring 'un on," giggled Priscilla. "Zo as we can all zee what he's like."

"Sold again. A young man for Priscilla Courtney. Three weeks this day at the same hour of the clock." And these were the last words he shouted before he passed out of the village to climb in silence the hill on the other side.

There was a deal of talk about this, for everybody must have a joke with Priscilla. Besides, the fellow would give some good turn to it, Brittleford could warrant he would. One thought he might bring the maid "a chainey image like, or zomethen o' that." But they all declared to Priscilla for certain sure the man must mean himself. So the public curiosity increased until the hawk's day came round again, and half the parish had one ear pricked, as the saying is, to listen for his approach. But the morning passed. The afternoon faded into dusk. Yet not a

sound of Silas had been heard. What could have happened? Not for ten years had he been known to miss a journey.

Then the news was brought from market that Silas had been caught appropriating coal from the heap set on the wayside in readiness for the rolling machine. Next we heard that Silas was in gaol. He was "a funny customer," we all saw that, and sly enough to pick up anything that lay handy as he passed along the road, you may depend upon it. Yet the thought that Silas would now lose his licence and come no more cast a gloom upon Brittleford whenever it was mentioned. As we agreed, "Silas always zold fair enough to we. And, zay what anybeddy mid about the feller, he did carr' a tongue in the head o' un, an' no mistake."

Six months passed. Harvest came, and he was almost forgotten.

"Come out, come out! Here he is again—the very masterpiece of a young man."

We popped out like rabbits. We were excited, for there on the hillside was the pony and cart once more. We all talked at once:

"Then they can't ha' stopped his licence." "We shall see whe'er or no his hair is a-cropped short." "Where's Priscilla?" "I wonder if he have a-brought Priscilla the sweetheart." "What good is it to talk like that? Why, Priscilla was a-walkin' in the lane, just in the dimmet last night, arm-in-crook wi' the miller's young man."

## CURIOUS CHESSMEN—I.



Knight.

Rook.

King.

Knight.

### INDIAN WORK.

IN all times and in all places men have played chess. The game has been played in humble cottage and in proud palace, on the field of battle and in the cells of monasteries. It is a game suited alike to artisan and student, to pope and king, to the hard-headed business man and the country gentleman whose faculties have been allowed to luxuriate—if it be possible—a little too freely on the orchard, the trout stream, the stud and the chase. Antique, dignified, conservative, escaping to a large extent the hand of innovation which has left the seal of indolence on so many games, chess, as a game universal, has yet passed through various phases of evolution. Its constitution differs among the nations, as do the thoughts and customs of Western peoples from those of the folk living in countries nearer the rising sun. The East, whence chess originated, retains its own pieces and methods, and the game played there is more complicated than that which obtains to-day in this country and in the tournaments of Europe and America.

An ancient Indian game was "Tchaturanga" (four-angled), or dice chess, in which four players took part, having eight men each—coloured red, green, yellow and black respectively. Each player had one corner of the board. The pieces were ship, horse, elephant and rajah, and were put in this order with the ship in the corner, while four pawns were ranged in front. The rajah, elephant and horse moved as do our king, rook and knight; the ship moved two squares diagonally, hopping over

an intermediate piece if necessary. If five were thrown with the dice, either the rajah or a foot soldier was moved; if four were thrown, the elephant was moved, and so on. In all Oriental countries the rajah or king or general, as he may be called, can be taken, and there is no queen, and so each man tries to take his adversary's king, whereupon he takes command of the latter's forces. In some Eastern parts a piece used to exist which could only jump over others, and then only when the piece to be jumped over was on an adjacent square. There is a very interesting collection in the Indian Museum, South Kensington, numbered 02,447/8, some of which we illustrate in our first picture. Twenty-seven pieces of this set have survived, made of carved ivory, lacquer painted in gold and colours; the sides are distinguished from each other by a predominance of bright green in one case and maroon in the other. The king consists of three men in a howdah upon an elephant; two men on an elephant represent the rook, while there are horsemen, and men mounted on camels carrying drums of some species; one camel rider has a gun, which appears to grow out of his middle; the grand vizier (queen) rides a richly-caparisoned horse, and the pawns are variously armed. Some beautifully carved Burmese, Sind, Vizagapatam and Berhampore men add to the attractiveness of this case. The best set of men, however, is one that comes from Berhampore, and is placed on a fine table of carved ebony with ivory inlay. The



men are all of white ivory, carved with the most exquisite skill and taste. The pawns are all perfect figures of soldiers, one side having swords and shields, while the other side carry spears only; one set of bishops wears a turban, the other goes bare-headed and carries an open book; in one case the knight swings his sword aloft, his horse arching a very graceful neck, in the other the knight is firing a small musket, the horse

The game as we Europeans know it, though of a more restricted character than some of those already mentioned, allows of the greatest liberality of treatment in regard to the conception and design of the men. The Greeks appear to have been the first to change the king's minister or vizier to a queen. So, at any rate, think chess historians, for the first set of men having a queen is believed to have been designed and made by a

Greek. This set, which is the earliest extant in which the king is conjugally mated, was presented by the Emperor Nicephorus or his Constantinopolitan predecessor to Charlemagne. The relics now in existence are in the Royal Library of Paris, having eventually made their way there from the Abbey of St. Denys, to which Charlemagne presented them. Ancient boards were made of the precious metals or stones, and were extremely massive and very large. That of Charlemagne is 2ft. square. The king is shown standing in a windowed recess, and on either side of him is a servant in the act of drawing aside a curtain; the queen is environed in the same style, with two attendant women. Both the dress and ornaments of the figures are like those of Greek costume in the ninth century. The bishop is represented by two figures mounted on an elephant, while a four-horse chariot does duty for the castle. A story is told of how Charlemagne played Guerin de Montglave for the kingdom of France; the king lost and, instead of France, ceded the city of Montglave (Lyons), then in the hands of the Saracens. Montglave made a good thing of this "bad debt," and, after capturing the city, won the hand of the soldan's daughter. We are accustomed to think of the old monks and ecclesiastics as being fond of chess, and no doubt we are right, but it appears that this game was not permitted to be played by them in public. One reason appears to have been that the use of dice for the move penetrated to Europe. An amusing instance of this rule being broken comes from Italy, where Cardinal Peter Damiani reported to Pope Alexander II. that he had imposed a penance on a Florentine bishop for playing chess in public, ordering the culprit to recite the psalter three times and then wash the feet of twelve poor persons, giving liberal alms to each. In North Spain was found a curious castle belonging to the eleventh century. It bears on the first side two knights on horseback with their lances in rest, and on the second side



Rook.

## INDIAN; A CRUDE ANTITHESIS.

Knight.

drawing his head back; for castles, pagodas are opposed to mosques. The kings stand in manner royal, holding a naked sword, and are sufficiently distinguished by the pose of their hands; and of the queens, one holds a fan and the other a flower, other differences in the style and ornamentation of the robes bearing further witness to the wonderful ability of the workman who designed them. They recall the set of men carved by the hero in "Under Two Flags."

Wu Wang (B.C. 1169-1116), the founder of the Chow dynasty, invented Chinese chess, the men of which are like draughts with the name written on; the pieces are: One general, two councillors, two elephants, two horses, two chariots (castles), two cannon, and five footmen. A river separates the two armies, and the horse, which has our knight's move, may not jump over a piece nor cross the river. Japanese chess is much like the latter; each general has under him two golden generals, two silver generals, one flying waggon, one angle-going (bishop), two knights, two fragrant chariots, and nine footmen. The flying waggon, on its entry into the enemy's camp (*i.e.*, after having crossed the river), is turned over and becomes a dragon king; in the same way, the angle-going becomes a dragon horse, there being privileges attendant on the promotions. The silver generals, knights, fragrant chariots and footmen can all become golden generals.

A good many pages could be written about the manifold variety of games of chess (using the word in its widest sense)—Indian, Italian, Arabic, German, Turkish—and others. There are games with 68, 100, 140, 144, 169 and 448 squares on the board; the number of pieces rises as high as 128, and there are games two, three, four, six and eight handed. The names of the pieces are legion—genius, wheeling hovel, camel, giraffe, unicorn, queen's fool, stag and rhinoceros. Among the others is a game called full chess or great chess, in which there are king, two lifeguards, two cuirassiers, two dragoons, one life hussar, two wing hussars, two cannon, two fusiliers and two batteries.

after capturing the city, won the hand of the soldan's daughter. We are accustomed to think of the old monks and ecclesiastics as being fond of chess, and no doubt we are right, but it appears that this game was not permitted to be played by them in public. One reason appears to have been that the use of dice for the move penetrated to Europe. An amusing instance of this rule being broken comes from Italy, where Cardinal Peter Damiani reported to Pope Alexander II. that he had imposed a penance on a Florentine bishop for playing chess in public, ordering the culprit to recite the psalter three times and then wash the feet of twelve poor persons, giving liberal alms to each. In North Spain was found a curious castle belonging to the eleventh century. It bears on the first side two knights on horseback with their lances in rest, and on the second side



Pawn.

Knight.

King.

Queen.

## BERHAMPORE CHESSMEN.

Adam and Eve in their innocence standing near the Tree of Life, round which is coiled the serpent; round the tree again to the extreme left Adam is portrayed, clad in pristine fashion, digging, and Eve, similarly attired, spinning; on the top of the castle are the figures of a wild boar and a dog.

That mediæval chessmen were large and heavy is very evident, and their use as a weapon was resorted to upon one

occasion by Duke Richard of Normandy. He was playing chess with Ivonnet, the son of Regnaut, and was just about to mate his opponent with his queen, when he was arrested by Regnaut's soldiers. "When Duke Rycharde saw that these sergeantes had him thus by the arm, and held in his hand a lady of ivory wherewith he would have given a mate to Yonnet, he withdrew his arm and gave to one of the sergeantes such a stroke with it into the forehead that he made him tumble over and over again at his feete; and then he tooke a rooke and smote another with all upon his head, that he all to brost it to the brayne." The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland possess three particularly interesting pieces—two knights and a warder. The warder was the figure of a soldier which took the place of the castle, moving as does the castle. The one alluded to belongs to the twelfth or thirteenth century; it is a two-sided piece, on either side of which is carved an armed figure emerging from foliage of unique design. Both figures bear shields and each shield presents bearings—a fleur-de-lys dimidiated. The distinction between this warder or castle and the warder of the hostile set was in the matter of the bearings presented on the shield.



EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

A knight, characteristic of the Henry III. or John period, is most interesting from a military point of view. As will be seen in our illustration on this page, it consists of two armed horsemen; the horseman on the left is armed with a sword and is walking his horse, while the one on the right carries a lance and is galloping away from the former; the right foot of the lancer is turned completely backwards, resting over the horse's right shoulder, while the rider gazes rearwards. Each horseman has a shield and a most curious heaume, or helm, having an eyelet, horizontal like a letter-box, across which runs a vertical rib. This is a rare kind of helm, slightly anterior to that on the seals of Henry III. and Edward I. The mail armour of these men consists of parallel rows of rings, while the surcoat has long folds, and there are suspensions on the legs of gamboised work or jacked leather. A later knight, belonging to the time of Edward III., is of Flemish workmanship. The ivory carving is perfectly done. The knight has a visored basinet, camail and a long-sleeved hauberk; his legs are plated and he has rowel spurs and a small curved shield, which is rather early for this period. The horse is mail-clad and its head is covered with a testière of plate.

## WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

### BIRDS AT PLAY AND IN STORM-TIME.

SOME weeks ago I spoke of having watched for a long time the antics of a rook and kestrel in the air. The rook rose from the ground to attack the kestrel, which was hovering near; and, thereafter, what looked like a half-hearted chase of one bird by the other went on for, I think, not less than half-an-hour, during which time they were continuously within range of my glasses—sometimes drifting to a considerable distance, but always working round again to approximately the place where they had started. I left them at the end of the half-hour still at it.

#### STRANGE PLAYFELLOWS.

A few days later I read in the Press a letter from one who signed himself "A Gamekeeper," telling how he had watched a rook and a kestrel "sporting" together in the air for three-quarters of an hour. "A Gamekeeper" did not suggest that they were doing anything else except sporting. Now, while I was watching my two birds the idea that it was only fun had come into my head, but I hesitated to suggest it. Certainly the kestrel showed no serious desire to get away from pursuit, which it could, one would suppose, easily have done had it wished. Nor did it ever stoop at the rook; if it had it could have struck without trouble. The rook appeared to be always the aggressor, but with remarkably little earnestness in his attacks, while many of the evolutions on both sides were difficult to explain on the theory that the two were enemies, one seeking the other's life.

#### A REPEAT PERFORMANCE.

Recently I have seen the same two birds at it again—presumably the same birds, for it was in the same place, over certain meadows which lie along the shores of a small river where rooks and kestrels are always to be found. I explained in my former note that these birds must be old acquaintances, not merely because they habitually haunt these same meadows, but because the kestrels nested last year next door to the rookery, in the same clump of trees, and not many yards away from the nearest rook's nest. This time, as before, a number of other rooks were present, feeding upon the ground, and paying no attention whatever to the two overhead. Also, as before, the chase went on over a considerable area, but in leisurely fashion, and with no show of temper on either side. On this second occasion I did not see the beginning of the game, but I did see the end, when the two separated quite inconspicuously, as it seemed, and as if by mutual consent, the kestrel settling on a tree and the rook dropping down to join its comrades on the ground. The kestrel after a minute or two left its perch and deliberately flew across the meadow, straight over the feeding rooks, and not 20ft. above their heads, to a wood on the further side. They paid not the smallest attention to its passing.

#### DO BIRDS EVER PLAY?

I am aware that Mr. F. W. Headley, in his recently-published "Life and Evolution," says definitely that birds never play. I wonder! If we deny the title "playing" to all the billing and cooing of birds in the breeding season, all their queer antics, whether on the wing or at rest (even in such extreme cases as that of the bower birds), one may still see cockatoos and other of the parrot tribe at any time of the year going through performances which, albeit of a rather solemn character, it is difficult not to believe are done in pure sport. Is a jackdaw not playing when, for example, it tweaks a puppy's tail and bolts for cover as soon as the puppy turns on it, and continues to go through the trick as many times a day as the puppy will give it opportunity? What is the spirit which moves the flamingoes in the Zoo when, one at a time, at intervals of a second or two, they rush ridiculously in follow-my-leader fashion through the water, evidently revelling in the act, only, after

arriving at the other side, to wait for a few minutes, and then begin to bolt in solemn sequence back again? I have watched a party of swallow-tailed kites on the wing going through the most amazing evolutions, which had certainly neither hostility nor sex-motive in them, and which it would be very difficult to ascribe to anything but the delight of the aerial play itself.

#### THE DANGER OF INFERENCE.

It is, of course, always extremely perilous to attempt to translate the actions and emotions of animals into terms of human thought and feeling. It may be that in none of these cases do the birds really "play." It may be that the rook and kestrel were doing something else; but I feel that there is need of more evidence than I know, or than Mr. Headley adduces, before we can accept unreservedly the statement that birds never play.

#### POLYGLOT WOODPECKERS.

I was not aware until three days ago that the greater spotted woodpecker has a note other than its usual whistling call. Walking along the edge of a strip of woodland I heard again and again a note that puzzled me, a shrill "chirp" somewhat suggestive of the alarm note of a blackbird, and which I had no doubt must belong to some member of the thrush family. I suspected a mistle-thrush. Then from inside the wood, to sit obligingly on a tree on the outskirts directly in front of me, flew a greater spotted woodpecker, and as he went up and up, flitting occasionally from one branch to another, he kept, at intervals of a second or so, with perfect regularity, giving the call that had puzzled me. It was only a couple of years ago that I learned that the wryneck has a varied chuckling note, almost a song, apart from the shrill kestrel-like cry with which we are all familiar. Probably other observers are familiar with the note as well as with that of the woodpecker, but both were new to me.

#### STORM-DRIVEN FOWL.

After ten days of mildness the return of frost in the third week of January again sent the birds moving Westward. There was, hereabouts at least, nothing like the general migration which occurred when the first severe weather broke on Boxing Day, chiefly because there were not so many birds to move. But when severe weather comes—especially in the case of the first heavy snow of the year—the same thing always happens. The birds travel ahead of the storm, or are driven with it, to regions where there is better chance of there being able to earn a living.

#### FOREIGN AND STAY-AT-HOME LARKS.

It is, of course, the ground-feeding birds that suffer most from a snow-fall, and so, when the snow came in Christmas week, the plovers disappeared in a night, and with them went the starlings and the redwings and fieldfares. Throughout the bad weather a few of the last two were still to be seen strung along the lee side of hedges and woodland, very weak and starving; but these, I suspect, were not the same birds as were in the same locality before the storm came. Those I imagine had all gone, while the few that remained were newcomers from further East and North, which had dropped out of the flight from weakness, and stayed perforce because they could go no further. Similarly the great multitude of the larks disappeared—all probably of the autumn flocks which arrived from the Continent. None the less a number of larks crowded into the villages, especially into the farmyards and among the ricks. These one would be inclined to guess to be the local birds which bred here last summer. As soon as the snow melted they went out again to the fields. Now again, during this last week, they have come into the yards once more, joining the company of sparrows, chaffinches and tits which have learned that when Nature turns cruel there is often salvation among the haunts of man.

H. P. R.



## WOOD-PIGEONS IN MIGRATION.

THE presence of the wood-pigeon, one of the wildest and shyest of English birds, in our London parks and gardens must ever be a pleasure to Londoners, and, indeed, the daily feeding of these birds conjointly with flocks of common pigeons and impudent sparrows by children, park visitors and bird-lovers generally, is one of the prettiest sights. This may be seen almost any day at the corner of the grass enclosure near the dell in Hyde Park, where the ducks and moorhens on the opposite side of the path join intermittingly in

the latter to be released from the meshes of the net, their wings cut and kept alive in "greniers" until required for sale. These stations are called *palombières*, and although the trapping is called *chasses aux palombes*, presumably because men with guns are usually stationed out of sight, some little distance behind the net, to shoot the stray birds who may by accident escape its trammels, the business has, as a rule, become a purely commercial transaction. It must not, however, be supposed that so wary a bird as the ring-dove is caught without considerable preparation



A WOODED GORGE IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY.

the general scramble. Whether the number of wood-pigeons in London is decreasing or increasing is an undecided point; but however this may be, and although it is a far cry from Hyde Park to the Pyrenees, yet some account of the annual destruction of these beautiful birds in the gorges of the Western Pyrenees may be interesting.

Now, it is not perhaps a matter of altogether common knowledge that the ring-dove, or common wood-pigeon (the French *palombe* or *ramier*), is, like many other species, a partial migrant to the sunny South for our cold winter months. The qualifying word partial must be used, because all of them do not desert our shores, but a certain number, say a third or a half as a guess, leave us about October for warmer climes. The markets and hotel menus in the South of France during the months of October and November afford tangible and convincing proof of the passage or migration of these birds at that period. The hecatombs on the slabs in the "halles," or markets, leave no doubt upon the point; while at other seasons not a ring-dove is to be seen there. This passage or migration alone explains why this shy bird is so plentiful in the South of France in October and November, and to a lesser degree in March and April. But how is so wild a bird captured in such large numbers? Let us see. On approaching the Pyrenees in their southern flight they instinctively seek certain gaps or passes in the mountains to avoid the gales and strong southerly winds which frequently blow at this period and impede their rapid flight. From time immemorial these passes have been known to the sparse but sporting inhabitants, and various devices practised to trap the birds intent upon crossing the ranges to their more genial winter resort. The most successful of these is to suspend a fine net across the gorge or pass, in a semi-circle concave to the approaching birds, and suspended to trees at both ends, with weights attached, which can be released at the proper moment, by two men hiding near, when net and birds fall together to the ground,

and trouble. The flocks begin to arrive in full flight for the South soon after daylight, but the *palombière* men, who have quietly taken up their stations before the dawn, are not without warning of their approach, for their advance is signalled by a watchman on some neighbouring eminence, perhaps two or three miles, or more, away, and later by men in trees, at intervals on either side of the line of flight. The last two men on the flanks nearest to the invisible net are provided with pieces of wood, cut in the shape of a hawk, with wings extended; these are deftly launched into the air, at the proper moment, above the

flight of birds, which in trepidation swoop downwards with incredible swiftness into the fatal net; the hidden men instantly let go the suspending cords, and net and birds tumble to the ground together a struggling, fluttering mass. The birds are then carefully extricated by their captors and transferred alive to the *greniers*, or enclosures, and the net suspended again for the capture of succeeding flights. The numbers caught at each fall of the net vary greatly, say from eight or twelve dozen to four or five single birds when they fly too high, swerve suddenly at the last, or the men themselves make some blunder. The birds seem to tire in their flight towards the middle of the day, and take a short rest; but the flights commence again in the afternoon and continue up to the approach of sunset; the morning, however, is the better time.

Among the wood-pigeons a few turtle-doves, and "bisets," called also *rocquets*, or rock-doves, from which our domestic pigeons are said to be derived, are generally taken, and these, although smaller birds, are considered better for the table, and sell for a slightly higher price than the *palombes*, whose value alive at the *palombières* is about a franc (10d.) a bird, but varies slightly according to the catch. To give an idea of the numbers captured in this way it will only be necessary to quote from a local French newspaper of November 2nd last, in which the close of the *chasse aux palombes* and the results at one *palombière* alone, Echalar, are



THE SHOOTER'S HIDING-PLACE.

announced as 7,000, of the value, at one franc apiece, of £280. Echalar is a village on the Spanish side of the French frontier, between the mountain Larhune (nearly 3,000ft.), within twelve miles of Biarritz, on which Wellington mounted a battery of guns to play an important part in the great Battle of the Nivelle on entering France in 1813, and the Bidassoa River, which he had just crossed. There is a smaller palombière at Sare, on Larhune itself, where much of the hard fighting occurred, and here the take was 4,800 birds this season. Now these palombières are scattered about in various directions along the Pyrenees, wherever there is a convenient pass for the birds, and it is difficult to ascertain their exact number; but a low estimate would probably place it at from thirty to fifty at least. Let us take the smaller number, thirty, and the average catch of each as that of the small palombière at Sare this year, and we arrive at the astonishing number of 144,000 wood-pigeons of the value of £5,700. This, then, may well be called "The Slaughter of the Doves!" On the return flight, or passage, northwards in the month of March the palombes are not taken in nets, but shot from bough-and-reed hiding-places in trees, with decoy birds on the ground beneath. This is a more difficult and far less successful or remunerative operation, as the birds arrive in more scattered detachments, are more wary, and neither so numerous nor apparently in such a hurry in the milder weather as on their southern route. The hiding-places of the shooters in the larger trees are quite a feature of the wooded ranges in the Basque country, and look like the nests of big birds of prey, as in one sense perhaps they are. But to return to London.

As an instance of how readily the wild ring-dove adapts himself to his environment, the writer, who, when strolling in Hyde Park, near the crowded Row, has himself had his hat touched by the wing of a wood-pigeon flying fearlessly over his head, has seen two of these shy birds, one perched on the shoulder and the other on the arm of a blind man seated on one of the park benches, and feeding out of his hand. A more curious example, however, was brought to his notice by hearing distinctly in his dressing-room, within a stone's throw of Belgrave Square, in the spring of last year, the cooing of a ring-dove to his mate. At first the bird was thought to be in one of the trees of the square, but large houses intervened, and the distance was too long for so distinct a sound. The mystery was solved shortly afterwards when Master Wood-pigeon was observed perched on a chimney-pot, and cooing away quite contentedly. With such a change of habits, no wonder that the brilliant plumage and lovely colouring of this beautiful bird is somewhat dulled and smoky in our London specimens. Nevertheless his omnivorous appetite does not seem to be by any means impaired by the London atmosphere, as the following little incident will show. Four of these birds were seen one sunny spring afternoon, when the park was thinning, to alight upon a branch of double red hawthorn, near one of the paths, and instantly commence a very ample supper by gulping down big bunches of the flower, which disappeared like magic down their capacious throats. In less than ten minutes the branch, which had been laden with lovely blossom, was left a flowerless collection of bare twigs.

W. HILL JAMES (LIEUT.-COLONEL).

## THE IRISH HERCULANEUM.

THE buried city of Bannow, sometimes spoken of as the "Irish Herculanæum," and situated on the south coast of the County of Wexford, was once a flourishing town, sending two members to Parliament, and with many streets whose names have been recorded in the Quit Rent Rolls and other documents. We learn from the "Acts of Settlement and Explanation" of the year 1668 that there were granted in trust for the officers of an English regiment then quartered in Bannow various houses, thatched and otherwise, in High and Little Streets, as well as "a house slated, with a house-plott, a garden plott,



A NETTING STATION.

and a large plott of ground in Lady Street." The Ordnance Map also gives a castle situated not far from the church, which, now in ruins, is all that is left of a borough once so fair, probably owing its preservation to the fact that it stands on an eminence; since the destruction of the place was not due to some mighty upheaval of Nature, some great cataclysm engulfing all buildings alike, but to the indrifting of the sands. These, in the first instance, so filled the harbour that it was rendered useless for purposes of shipping and of trade, thus driving the inhabitants to seek new homes in the neighbouring towns of Waterford and Wexford. The deserted houses were quickly covered by the sands, which had proved the commercial ruin of the town. Very quickly, it would seem, for less than twenty years after the grant named, a writer of the period tells us that "ye towne of Bannoo is now quite ruined, there being nothing but ye ruins of an olde Church, and of severall stone Houses and antient Streets and some low Cabbins."

Until within quite recent times there were to be seen a prostrate mass of masonry—all that was left of the lofty chimney of the Town Hall—and a few traces of other buildings; but now even these have disappeared, and all is one great "waste of surly sand and hill-cked shore," whose mounds at least seem to mark the spots where the roof-trees rose above the happy homes of the dwellers in the prosperous town of Bannow. According to both the historian, Giraldus Cambrensis, and the Norman rhymist, Michels, it was here that the troops of FitzStephen, the lieutenant of Strongbow, landed in 1169, nominally to recover for the tyrant Macmurrough the sovereignty

of Leinster, in reality to conquer the fair country of Ireland for the English throne. A doggerel couplet hath it that—

"At the creek of Ban-an-bun  
Ireland was lost and won."

But to so-called rhyme and not to reason it is evident we owe this distich, which, moreover, only dates from the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century, and carries no weight whatsoever, since Michels, who had his information from an eye-witness, none other than the interpreter of Macmurrough, expressly states that

"At Banne arrived they  
With all their followers as they were;  
When they had brought to  
And had all disembarked  
They caused their men to lodge  
Hard by the sea-shore."

There is no longer, except in name, any island of Bannow, since, like that of Thanet, it is now connected with the mainland on one side, while on the other there are at low tide only a few narrow channels, and near the shore a small sheet of deep water, "surrounded on every side by thousands of acres of sand and sludge." At high tide it is still possible for coal barges and other small craft to pass for a few miles up the Bannow River.

Though the church founded by "the proud invader" is now a mere wreck, yet it is extremely interesting. Under one sepulchral slab it is by some believed that FitzStephen and his wife are sleeping, but this is by no means proven. Indeed, the inscription states that beneath lie the remains of Johannes Colfer and Anna Siggins, but since the characters are of a much later date than the tomb itself, this is very inconclusive evidence on the other and negative side of the question. The slab is a fine one, showing the figures, as far as the waist, of a knight and lady in thirteenth century costume, while the remainder of the stone is engraved with a richly-foliated cross. The nave, where this monument is to be seen, has other relics of the past, in stone coffins, with headpieces and lids for the most part broken. The semi-circular Norman arch of Caen stone dividing nave and chancel is in fair preservation, but the handsome east window of a later century is much injured and falling into decay. Roofless and solitary as is this ruined place of worship, its walls still stand firm and staunch, reminiscent of a past in which there is desolation but no shame.

The deserted city strikes one as intensely pathetic. The roofless mounds, though perchance only driven into these forms by the strong sea breezes, are so suggestive. So, too, is this vast expanse of sand covering what was once a prosperous town, where men and women came and went; bought and sold; gossiped it may be at the street corners; made love, doubtless, as is the wont of the "eternal he and she" in shady bowers in some quiet "garden plott." Now only a few cattle glean a scanty living from the bunches of herbage sparsely scattered round, and none of all the buildings the old church, once thronged, according to the devout Irish custom, with ardent worshippers, stands mute and desolate, "in stern wasteness and gloom, eaten away by the Channel winds and overgrown by the bitter sea grasses."



The view from Bannow on a glorious summer evening such as that on which I saw it last, is very beautiful, whether one gazes out to where lie Ban-an-bun and Strongbow's Rock on the opposite side of the bay, or inland where the distant hills show like purple islands "poised in the golden West," and with

even the narrow channel with its acres of sludge and sand, turned to amethyst and ruby, amber and opal, by that great alchemist the setting sun. I am glad to think of it thus; poor buried city, sad Herculaneum of the lonely Irish shore *leben wohl!*

MARY F. A. TENCH.

## SOME OLD STONE CROSSES IN DORSETSHIRE.

RELIGION is proverbially conservative, and the new "open-air" school has not touched it—has not brought it back to mediæval ways. Public worship takes place within doors. Churches and chapels are sufficient for this purpose, and our climate is antagonistic to the exhibition of best clothes—so essential a part of the British Sabbath—except under prudent cover. So open-air preaching has become unfashionable—shall I say even vulgar?—and it has taken the Salvation Army twenty years of zealous and successful devotion to social "betterment" to, in some measure, efface the stigma of its original *al fresco* methods. Yet in a former age—an age when religion entered more deeply into the daily life of the people, when the church was far more of a living force than to-day—open-air preaching was not merely popular, it was perfectly respectable.

How often now, in churchyard or on village green, do we still find some battered remnant of the stone cross, which may have had other occasional public uses, but was essentially a platform for the proclamation of the Word of God. Nor can it be argued that this was an uncomfortable necessity, a *pis aller* caused by lack of roofed accommodation. At first, yes, the Christian missionary to the pagan Saxon gathered his flock in the open. Even after the general conversion, money and skill were often wanting to erect a church of size to hold the eager congregations, and the preacher stood upon a step of wrought stone beside the emblem of his faith—a cross sculptured on a monolith. Of these primitive crosses some survive, especially in Cornwall. Here they were of granite, whose hardness offered a sturdy opposition to the ravages of time, while it compelled a simplicity of form and a reticence of ornament which favoured survival. Often, too, their utility for other purposes saved them in the later age of indifference. They made excellent gate-posts. I know a very fine one—once more honourably erected—which had long served in that humble capacity. Its large round head, on which the cross is excised, is in admirable preservation, because the practical farmer had ensured the utmost stability by letting it into the ground big end downwards. Even elsewhere, in more



IN BRADFORD ABBAS CHURCHYARD.

central and changeful regions, and where a softer stone, capable of greater elaboration, was in use, happy accident has occasionally preserved to us bits of this early work. In 1891, during the restoration of the church of Ramsbury—the original seat of the Wilts bishopric, which was afterwards removed to Old Sarum—several stones with very fine runic work were discovered, having been used for foundations. One or two were portions of coffin lids, but three, certainly, had formed part of the highly-carved shaft of a splendid preaching cross of the Saxon era when the canopy of heaven was, as yet, alone ample enough to hold the crowding worshippers. But in later mediæval times this was no longer the case. The art of noble building had grown apace and was essentially at the service of the Church. However small, rough and temporary may have been the houses of the people, the House of God was great, splendid and enduring. Yet, side by side with these all-containing churches, the preaching crosses grew and multiplied. It is the fourteenth century which gives us the greatest number of surviving remnants, and the popularity of open-air services at that time was due to the ascendancy of the friars. A very interesting and full account of "The Old Stone

Crosses of Dorset" has been recently written by Mr. Alfred Pope, and he shows by a map that "the crosses of this county follow certain well-defined tracks . . . clearly indicating the circuit taken by the preaching friars who went from abbey to abbey teaching and ministering to the people."

Four of these Dorset crosses—all of which are so carefully catalogued and well described by Mr. Pope—illustrate this article, and are selected to show not only the original character, but the fateful history of these interesting relics of mediæval art and mediæval habit. The heavy hand of the Henry VIII. Reformers treated them comparatively lightly. Protected by Elizabeth, treasured by Laud, they were a special object of Puritan fury, and the Rebellious Parliament signed their death warrant in 1643. Not only in churches, but "all crosses in any open place" were to be at once removed by the church wardens under penalty of 40s., unless proof were offered that they were only for a monument



SHAPWICK CROSS.

to any "dead person which hath not been commonly reputed or taken for a saint." I imagine this loophole was largely taken advantage of, for many "monuments" to the uncanonised dead survived the age of destruction to suffer during the age of indifference. From the time of Cromwell to our own they were neither hated nor loved; they were uncared for; they were gate-posts or foundation-stones. In villages they were a handy object for children to romp around and deface. In towns they were a mere obstacle to "improvements," and were bodily removed. How late this went on may be appreciated by comparing their number and condition when Hutchins wrote his "History of Dorset" a hundred years ago with those which Mr. Pope has found remaining. Then came the "revival," and with it a new enemy in the shape of the "restorer." What wonder, then, that complete examples are rare. In Monmouthshire, for instance, one only remains intact, and that of the humblest type, the little cruciform monolith in the churchyard of Kilgwrwg, a parish as out of the way in position as in name. Another is complete but severed—the socket by the roadside, the head and shaft in a cottage garden—and of this we hear, "A man living at the Blue Broom moved it from its base at the cross roads to his garden. From that moment he had no luck . . . He attributed his misfortunes to his having sacrilegiously taken possession of the cross, so he carried it out of his garden and cast it down on a piece of waste ground." A very summary and simple way of doing penance for sacrilege.

In Dorsetshire, too, there is only one preserved whole—in the high street of Stalbridge—but that an exceptionally fine one, as the illustration shows. How sufficient are its proportions, how enticing its details. On three steps stands the noble, single-block socket with its carved side panels and corner columns. Thence rises the 12ft. shaft—sizeable, strenuous, yet not squat or lumpy; from it stands forth a canopied figure. Ending in a shielded abacus, the shaft supports the tabernacle. Its front breadth and side narrowness are charming. A well-proportioned and agreeably ornamented frame encloses the sculptured pictures



IN STALBRIDGE HIGH STREET.

it contains, and the rather surprising, three-tiered, yet well-connected crocketed spire gives the finish to an original and personal bit of work by a craftsman whose excellent art sense was half instinctive, half acquired, who could not quite tell why, but whose work was bound to come out right. Compare this with its neighbour at Shillingstone. Here the fine old steps and socket, worn and mellow with age, have been fitted with a

best-workmanship, brand-new shaft and tabernacle—so much a copy of Stalbridge as to totally lack originality, and yet so little a copy that the whole form and spirit of its model are lost. It is worthy and uninteresting, correct and uninspired.

At Shapwick the local amateur has evidently been the restorer of the village cross. In 1803 it was still in fair preservation. Then decay, assisted by a drunken freak, wrought havoc. The remains have now been put together with much crude



THE SHILLINGSTONE CROSS.

cement, and in the socket has been placed "what looks like a milestone, but is intended to represent the stump of the original shaft which was destroyed." At least the fake is honest; it cannot possibly deceive.

In the churchyard of Bradford Abbas once stood a cross like that at Stalbridge, but probably even finer. Calvary and crocketed spire are gone—the work of 1643, no doubt—and time and boys have dealt hardly with the elaborate wrought work of socket and shaft. The latter had canopied figures on each of its four sides. The former had carved centre panels and corner columns acting as bases to detached figures. It is a wreck, but a sympathetic one. Nature has, in a measure, healed the wounds inflicted by human passion and carelessness. She has softened their ragged edges, and covered their jags and rents with moss and lichen and a hundred soft tones. The mutilation of so good a fifteenth-century piece is deeply to be regretted. The loss is irreparable; only one thing could intensify it—the "restoration" which it has hitherto, luckily, escaped.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

## THE OLD GARDEN WALL.

IT stands on two sides of the fruit garden, facing the south and west, and shielding the mellow space within from the edge of the chilly winds that sweep across the valley from the high hills rolled across the east. The dark pines stand without the wall; inside its two embracing arms the distances and the hill-edge are lost to view, and its stone face holds the fan-like peach and nectarine branches to the sun in a nest of rich colours and ripening warmth. The wall is built of irregular blocks of stone, all laid with one smooth face to the front, and capped with a narrower line of bricks, laid cross-wise for a coping; and although lumps from all the tangled strata of a strangely intricate soil were brought together for the building of the house and its garden, the wall only rarely shows the rough, coralline whiteness of the coarser limestones, the cool, grey grain of the same rock's finer beds, or the grotesque, harlequin blocks of the red, white-kernelled pudding-stone from the nether hill. The stone that meets the eye, and gives its whole tone of warmth and mellowness to the ancient



wall, is a certain pale, tawny sandstone that ripens in wind and sun to a glowing beeswax brown, and seems to possess a strange secret of hidden fire and a kindred gift of nurturing in its obscurely glittering grains the warmth and the very perfume of the sun. In the early evening of the hot days of July, when the sunlight dwells still golden on its coping, the heat-loving humming-bird hawk moths dart from the sweet tubes of the jessamine to settle and bask upon its warm upper surface, pausing, for once, at rest, but still fretting and vibrating their half-raised, smoke-brown wings. After the sun is gone, the glow and the strange pungent scent of the heated stone still radiate into the dusk. And where a heap of stones left over by the builders lies, moss-covered and weasel-tunnelled, in the waste garden fringe at the end of the wall, the children who haunt the garden long ago found out how one block dashed upon another gives out from its white, dense bruise a scent of sulphur and burning, very magical and comforting with its hint of nether flame and its suggestion of that smoke-spouting Apollyon whom the over-niceness of our age no longer permits to straddle all across the way, to the obstruction of traffic on any of the parish roads, as once in the better days of Bunyan.

The weathered crown of the wall is the frontier-line of all the birds that build in the high pines beyond and in the dense thickets and shrubberies that surround the garden on all sides. All day long, from midsummer, when the strawberries ripen, till that week in mid-September when the reddening orchards draw them away from the last of the yellow raspberries, the crest of the wall is alive with the alternate daring and consternation of the marauding flocks of tawny-breasted blackbirds of the year, guided, rather than led, by a few old sable cocks who have outlived rashness, and hardened in resourcefulness and cunning. Many other birds use the wall in lesser numbers for their forays on the garden; even the robin takes to brigandage, and swift, precipitate sallies, when the red and white currants are ripening in July; and the shabby mother willow-wren leads down her troop of silent, sulphur-breasted young, that slip their slender bodies through

the mesh of the protecting net with an ease and evident unconsciousness of transgression in pointed contrast with the nervous cackling of the black-birds, guiltily huddling at the mouth of some discovered rent.

From the traffic of the birds of fifty years, aided by the winds that blow from the outer field and the garden, the sloping crown of the wall has gathered and nurtured a great variety of seeds of tree and weed and flower, and now supports a delicate and miniature flora strangely different in growth and appearance from the plants that flourish in the richer soil below. The crimson wallflower, and purple and golden snapdragon, lift sparse, erect, but doubly deep and vivid heads of blossom irregularly along the grey line of the stone. The wild rose briar flings out from its crevice between the topmost bricks a single beautiful arch, winged in June with its blossoms of tender pink, and beaded for months of autumn and winter with the red coral of the half-dozen glossy haws that are crushed and rifled at last by some smaller bird that can cling to the swinging stem. The silver cup-moss stands stiff and frosted upon the stones, and among its hoary trumpets the strawberries ripen red, tiny replicas of their garden forerunners from which the blackbirds bore the seed, but always rounder and sweeter than those of the true wild stock. With clubbed, grey-rinded root stems coiling among the stones, dwarf bushes of red currant and of gooseberry are nurtured into stubborn life, and mimic the richness of the garden with a single cluster or berry, which the blackbirds leave untouched in greedy contempt, but the willow-wrens of July search out with silent method and purpose. And when the willow-wrens come, year by year the sulphured torch of one tall mullein stem has already risen high on the ridge of the wall, with its slow fire creeping from butt to crest, and seeming, by its lofty signal of flame, to be measuring out the length of the dog-days with an insolent tropical challenge. When the mullein has flamed away at last, we know that it is time for the cooler dews of the August mornings, when the robins sing again at dawn, and for the willow-wrens to vanish from the garden till another spring.

A. C.

## THE SNAKE EAGLE.

THE short-toed or, as it is most commonly called, the snake eagle, which arrives in Spain from Africa in March and April and returns in September and October, is an exceedingly handsome bird, the general colouring above being light brown, and below pure white. The nest, which is built of sticks, and is very compact for the size of the bird, is lined with green leaves, the latter being continually renewed, and is usually placed on the horizontal bough of a cork or an oak tree and contains one large rough white egg, which is laid about the middle of April.

On May 4th, as the sun was rising in a fiery ball behind the Rock and the fishermen were bringing in their night's catch for the early market, I left Gibraltar Pier for the Cork Woods, and

a couple of hours later reached the welcome shade of the trees. Nothing can exceed the beauty of these woods on a spring morning, when all Nature seems to be awake and the many feathered songsters who are taking a brief rest on their Northward journey are vieing with each other in a joyous chorus. Every glade, too, is carpeted with flowers, among which the purple irises are especially conspicuous, while higher up on the dry ground the whole landscape is white with the gorgeous blossom of the gum cistus and other flowering shrubs. Even at that early hour it was exceedingly hot, but a heavy dew, so heavy that I was soon soaking wet up to my knees, made everything bright and fresh. A camera with accessories, spare lenses, plates, etc., lunch, and, most important of all, one's water-bottle--



THE HEN BIRD ARRIVING AT NEST.

for most of the springs have by this time dried up—forms a heavy load and makes one's progress through the thick vegetation necessarily slow, and so it was not until nearly eleven o'clock that I reached the snake eagle's nest I had previously discovered. Built on the horizontal branch of a cork tree growing on a steep slope, it was admirably situated for my purpose, as by going up the hill I could look right into it and even see the egg. Selecting a point level with the nest and about 20 yds. away, I quickly erected my camera, covering the whole thing over with brushwood, which I tied on securely with string to prevent a gust of wind blowing anything across the front of the lens; then making a "hide" for myself a little further away, I crept in under the bushes I had cut down and had my lunch for I well knew the birds would not return for at least two hours I had sent to England for a telephoto lens, but as it had no



YOUNG ONE HALF OUT OF NEST.

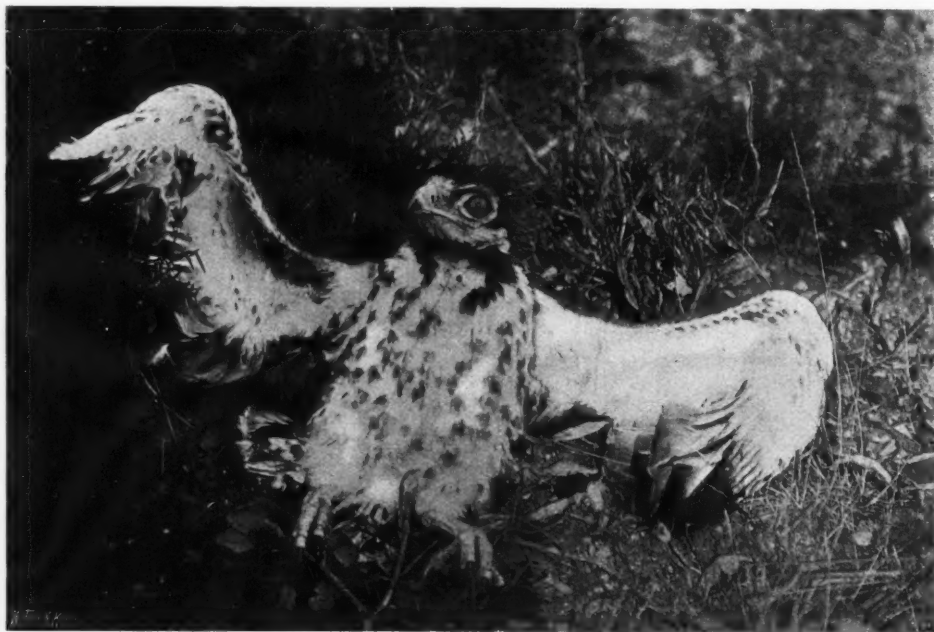
arrived I was forced to content myself with what I had, and used the single combination of my Zeiss doublet. During my enforced wait I was much interested in a pair of blue tits, evidently setting up house, who, returning again and again, ransacked the nest and carried away every feather they could find. About two o'clock the hen returned, flying straight for the nest, and I snapped her as she stood on the edge for a moment. She did not pay the very slightest attention to the new queer-looking bush, and after turning the egg over settled herself down comfortably on it. By bringing up my field-glasses very quietly I was able to observe her closely and to note the unceasing vigilance she exercised in every direction. At length I could not endure my



THE PARENT'S RETURN.

cramped position any longer, and in trying to make myself more comfortable betrayed my whereabouts, when, of course, she took flight at once. The annexed picture, though small, shows her just about to settle on her egg.

On May 13th, the new telephoto lens having at length arrived, I again visited the nest with hopes of great things. Alas! the egg was gone. Climbing up, I found two large stones inside, evidently the wanton work of one of the many boys who are employed herding the large flocks of goats, and who are badly in need of any small diversion to while away the long hours of a summer day. On July 15th I found another eyrie of the same species which, fortunately, had escaped the all-prying eyes of the collector and which contained a chick about a week old, and I spent nine whole days covered up with bushes within easy reach, watching it. The tree was growing on a gentle slope, and to obtain a decent picture was most difficult, for if I placed my camera near, it was of necessity much below; and the bird, of course invariably alighting on the far edge of the nest, was invisible all



THE CHICK ON THE GROUND.

but its head and neck. On the other hand, when my apparatus was placed sufficiently far up the slope to command both sides of the nest the image was too small even with the telephoto. On many days, though I waited from 7.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., the parent birds did not return at all, very probably having seen me; on others, either the cock or hen returned two or three times bringing a snake for their baby's dinner, which was invariably carried in the bill.

On August 12th I was much annoyed on arrival



to find the whole structure on the ground and the chick nowhere to be seen. I naturally supposed it had been pulled down maliciously; however, a plaintive call from the high bracken attracted my attention, and there I found the young bird apparently none the worse. Fortunately I had a large ball of stout string in my pocket, and after about an hour's hard work—and it was hard work with the thermometer at 60 deg. in the shade—the nest was reconstructed in its old situation and the chick returned to its nursery. On August 19th I found the new nest intact, but the young bird again on the ground. Whether my experience as a builder was not to its taste, or whether it had again been blown out, I cannot say; however, I again put it back, and on August 26th I was much pleased on arrival to find the youngster in the nest, which had been entirely relined with fresh green leaves, and after four hours' patient waiting, I was rewarded by the hen returning and feeding her offspring. She remained for some time, and though evidently a little suspicious of the glint of the lens, did not take fright.

Alas! Nature's ways are full of tragedy, for returning on September 1st with great hopes of a really good photograph, I found the young one dead on the ground and already partly eaten by the ants. It must have got on the very edge of the nest in its eagerness for the proffered food and have lost its balance and fallen, injuring itself; indeed, during my previous visit I saw it very nearly do the same thing, and had the mother not put her breast against it and pushed it forcibly back, it would then have tumbled out. As it is, the last photograph, which I took a moment or two after, shows it in a very precarious position. I wonder what percentage of young birds ever reach maturity, for out of the many nests of the various eagles I have known of here, only one has been successfully reared. These eagles seem to feed entirely on reptiles, snakes principally, as in the cases when I personally watched their return, they invariably brought the latter. Sometimes when it was small the young one would try to swallow it whole, and the reptile, which was not quite dead, would wind its tail round and round the bird's neck in its efforts for freedom. Snakes, like lizards, are exceedingly fond of eggs and very destructive to ground-building birds, and though gamekeepers are the same all the world over, and shoot every hawk, eagle and owl at sight, I feel sure that this one, at any rate, should be reckoned as their warmest friend.

H. MOORE.

## IN THE GARDEN.

### EDGINGS IN THE FLOWER GARDEN.

**A**T this planting season, when the flower garden is perhaps undergoing a change, it is wise to think of the ways in which one can bring as much sweetness and beauty to the borders or beds as possible. One must try to scatter flowers everywhere, especially when the garden is small, and the edgings should certainly be thought of. As a rule these are of grass, which is the least satisfactory of all, giving much trouble to maintain in condition, and when trodden upon, as is frequently the case, never have that fresh green colouring essential to good effect. They must be constantly mown and cut, and are always in sharp, unsympathetic contrast to the flowers near them.

*The Beauty of Stone Edgings.*—There is no question that the natural stone such as one may sometimes obtain from a quarry in the neighbourhood of the garden forms the best permanent edging. It makes not only a good firm edging, but provides excellent material for plants to ramble over. An edging of flowers is the most beautiful of all, and soon the weather dyes the stone a colour grateful to the eye. On no account should wood or hard tiles take the place of natural stone, failing which, Box or Ivy should be used instead. Fix the stone firmly in the soil, and plant just behind it plants which will fall over it and make masses of flowers, and throughout the winter a delicious green mass as refreshing as the grass of the field. The Saxifragas and Stonecrops are very satisfactory for this purpose, and the large-leaved *Megasea corioliola* is, we are pleased to see, becoming a great favourite as a bold edging to beds of large size or some place where a good foreground is desired. There is a strength of colouring and



A YOUNG SNAKE EAGLE.

form in the leaves, which in winter assume beautiful shades of brown and crimson, and in early spring the flowers appear in dense handsome spikes. The choice of flowers is a wide one: Tufted Pansies, *Gentianella* (where the soil is cool and moist), Alpine Phloxes, the Arabis, Thrift, Pinks, Primroses, Polyantheses, and of evergreens Ivy and Box. More use might be made of the white Pink, which gives a delightful charm to many a cottage garden—we mean the pretty fringed flower of June; it has not only a summer beauty, but the silvery colour of the leaves is pleasant at all seasons. We bring flowers to every suitable spot in the garden. By the margin

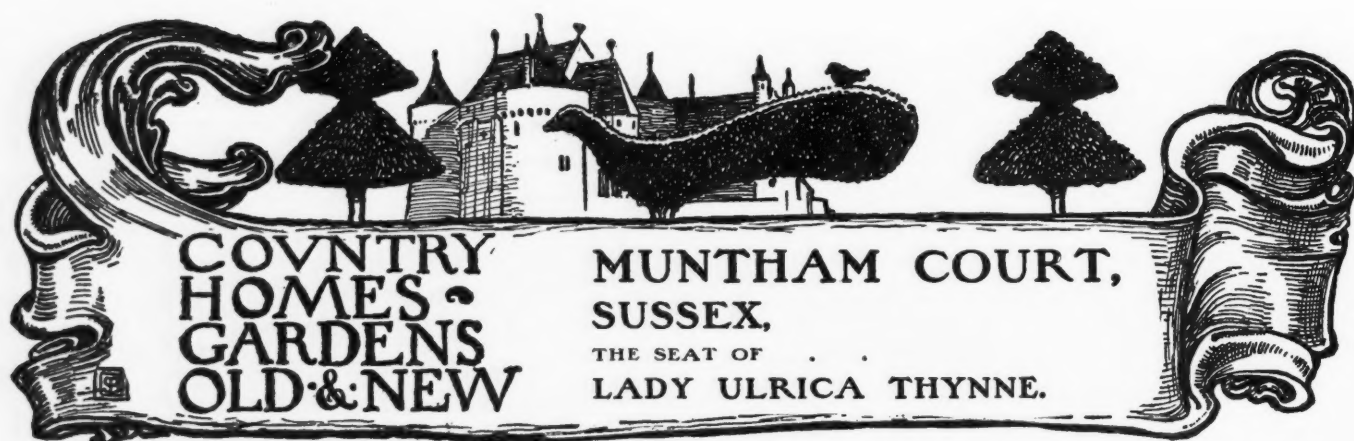
of the kitchen garden plots Polyantheses and Primroses have been planted with the white Madonna Lily, and for the autumn the white and crimson-spotted *Lilium lancifolium*, with here and there a group of the Tiger Lily. Such margins change the character of the garden, and make the most unlikely spot fair to look upon.

### SHIRLEY POPPIES FROM SEED.

The following information concerning these most beautiful Poppies is given by the raiser of the flower, the Rev. W. Wilks, the vicar of Shirley and secretary to the Royal Horticultural Society, and includes some wholesome remarks on the futility of sowing the seed of annual flowers as thickly as is the usual custom: "One of the reasons people so often fail with hardy annuals is in not sowing them early enough. Another reason, and one far more prolific of harm, is in sowing the seed too thickly or too deeply, and not thinning out the young plants soon enough or sufficiently. Many people, again, do not think hardy annuals worth taking any trouble about, little knowing the exquisite beauty that many of them return for really but little pains bestowed. A magnificent display of flowers may be secured from the seed if the following course be pursued: 1. On as early a day as possible in February choose a plot of ground 16ft. to 18ft. square or thereabouts, give it a liberal dressing of rich dung, and dig it in well, and leave it to settle. 2. For sowing, choose the first fine open day in March, free from actual frost, when the grounds work easily, and rake the surface over. 3. Mix the seed with five or six times its own bulk of dry sand so as to make it easier to sow it thinly. 4. Scatter the mixture thinly, broadcast, over the raked surface, and rake again lightly. 5. When the seedlings are large enough to handle, if there should be any bare patches in the bed, move with the tip of a trowel a few tiny clumps from where they stand thickest. 6. As soon as the bed shows regularly green, stretch two lines across it parallel to each other at 8in. apart, and with a Dutch hoe, hoe up all between the lines, sparing those plants only that are close to each line. Move the lines, and so hoe all the bed, which will then consist of a number of thin lines of seedlings 8in. apart, and the hoed-up ones lying between. 7. About a week later stretch the lines again 8in. apart, at right angles to the previous lines, and hoe again. This, when finished, will leave a number of tiny square patches of seedlings 8in. apart each way. 8. A week later thin out the little patches by hand, leaving only one plant in each. Now every plant will have 8in. square to grow in. 9. Directly the plants show the first sign of running up to blossom put a thin line of 2ft. high Pea sticks between every two lines of the plants to strengthen them to resist the wind and rain. They will soon grow above the sticks and hide them. 10. In dry weather thoroughly soak the bed once a week. A little sprinkle overhead is useless. N.B.—Be sure the operation described in No. 6 is done early enough, otherwise the plants will have become 'leggy' before your thinning is completed, and when once Poppies become leggy they are practically ruined."

### A FAMOUS GROWER OF CARNATIONS.

To the recently-published annual report of the National Carnation and Picotee Society, Mr. James Douglas, the Carnation specialist, contributes an interesting review of the flower, and from it we extract the following reference to Mr. James Hogg, a great cultivator of Carnations sixty or seventy years ago: "He wrote a book on 'The Carnation and Other Garden Flowers.' My edition is the sixth, and it was published in 1839. It contains a coloured plate of a bizarre Carnation; it is very much in the style of 'Franklin's Tartar,' published half a century earlier; but the most interesting part of 'Hogg's Treatise' is the chapter on yellow ground Picotees. Now we know from 'Gerrard's Herbal' that the yellow Carnation was introduced into England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and had developed into the yellow ground Picotee in the seventeenth century, but probably, owing to the English climate not being adapted to the seedling of Carnations in the open garden, the best yellow ground Picotees came from the Continent in Hogg's time, and he states that some of them were raised in Morocco. He gives the names of fifty varieties, but none of them English. It is interesting to learn from Hogg that the Empress Josephine had an admirable collection of yellow Picotees in her garden at Malmaison; and, he adds, 'The late Queen Charlotte and the Princesses had a superb collection of yellow Picotees at Frogmore.'



**S**ECLUDED in a deep and sheltered hollow below the wind-swept Downs, more richly wooded here in Western Sussex than are the chalk hills further to the east, and in a region distinguished by much of the finest Down scenery, stands the fine house of Muntham, with the rich woods that embower it and the gracious gardens that are its adornment. Hereabout on the heights are wide prospects of hill, wood and sea, for it is a country of varied landscapes, rounded elevations and sheltered leeward combs, where "Drowsy tinklings lull the distant fold," rich in the loveliness of English beauty, and forming an appropriate setting for the house which has been built here by those who have chosen well and planted wisely. The house may perhaps be said to owe its existence to the celebrated hunting attractions of the district, which have caused many persons who could choose where they would dwell to take up their residence in this part of England. The parish of Findon, in which Muntham partly stands, was the centre of the celebrated Charlton Hunt, and here, consequently, Anthony Viscount Montagu built his hunting-box in the eighteenth century. A mansion had occupied the site in the previous century, with its garden, dove-house and its acreage of wood, meadow, pasture and brush land. It was a sporting country, and, when fox-hunting took the place of the older forms of sport, the Duke of Richmond was attracted to this part of Sussex and installed

himself at Goodwood. The Duke of Monmouth was so fond of the place that he used to say that when he was king he would come and keep court where the Charlton Hunt had its seat.

The manor or estate of Muntham gave name to a family which was seated at the place in the time of Edward III., when it passed to Thomas Cornwallis in 1373, being subsequently, up to the reign of Elizabeth, in the hands of the Apsleys of Pulborough. The Shelleys and Gorings afterwards possessed it, and it was sold in 1625 to Sir Sackville Crowe, from whom it passed to John Middleton. This gentleman, who had really provided the money for the purchase by Crowe, was M.P. for Horsham, and his descendants possessed it until 1743, after which it passed to Anthony Browne, sixth Viscount Montagu, owner of the neighbouring princely house of Cowdray, who enlarged or rebuilt the old mansion at Muntham to use it for hunting purposes. He did not retain it long, and it was sold in 1765, two years before his death, for £6,300 to Mr. William Frankland, who was descended on the female side from Oliver Cromwell, and belonged to the family of the Franklands of Thirkleby in Yorkshire, who received a baronetcy at the Restoration. Henry Frankland was Governor of Fort William, Calcutta, and the purchaser of Muntham was his son.

William Frankland returned from Bengal about the year 1760, and crossing the Persian Gulf, disguised as a Turkish







THE NORTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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messenger, travelled from Bagdad to Jerusalem, afterwards visiting the site of Babylon and the ruins of Palmyra. Muntham being advantageously situated in a fine country was much to his mind. He therefore greatly enlarged the hunting-box and spent a good deal of money upon the structure and its surroundings, and he erected a curious white wooden obelisk on the hill. He was a man of scientific tastes, and possessed a genius for

wood, and to execute heads and figures upon them by mechanical means. Another room was furnished with machinery for spinning and other operations in the manufacture of textile fabrics. There were also several printing presses of different kinds, and another apartment was crowded with many varieties of clocks, timepieces and electrical and optical apparatus. There were many musical instruments played by machinery, and a place was



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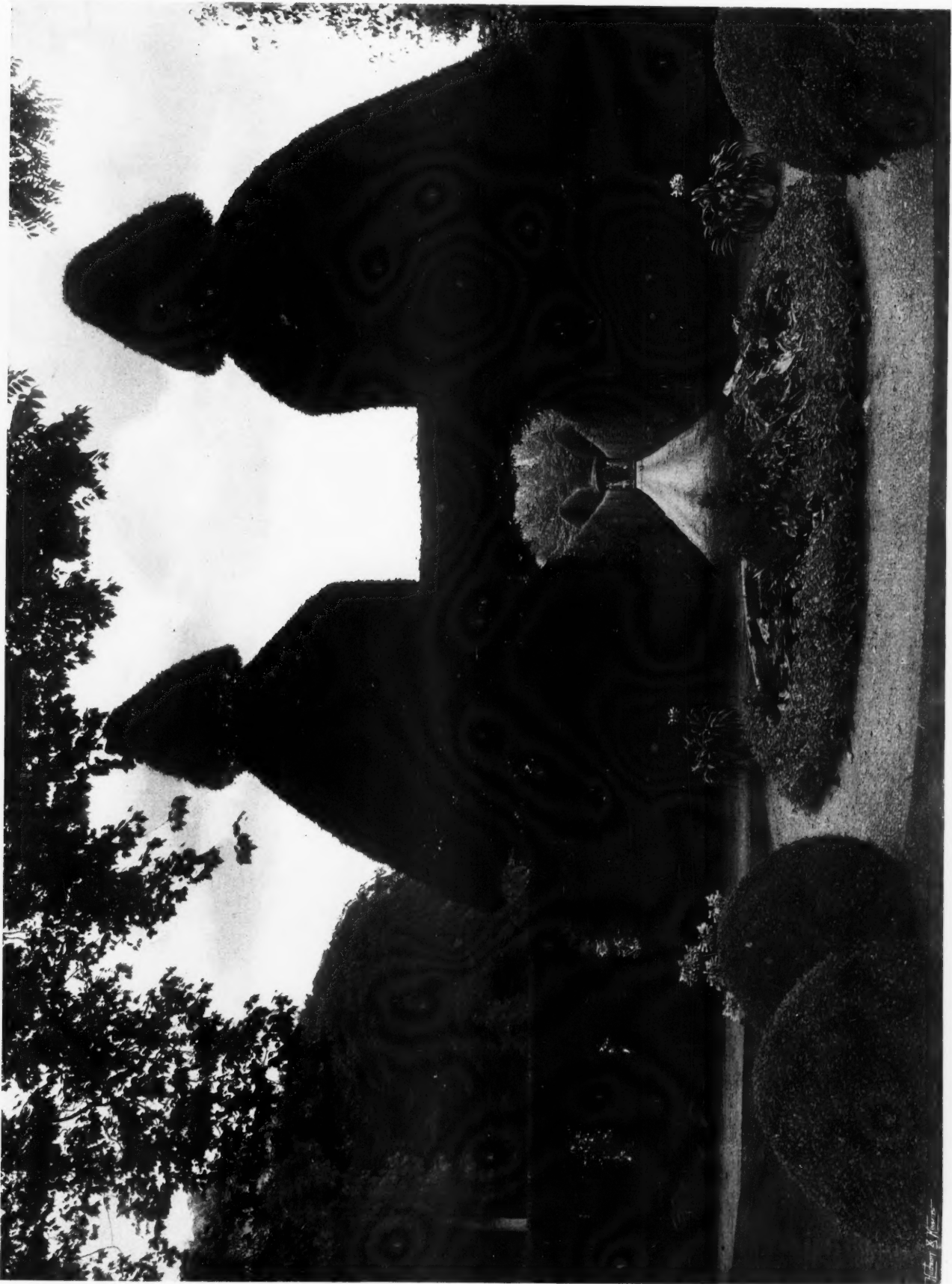
THE BAY WINDOW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

mechanical pursuits. It is said that he expended at least £20,000 in scientific researches and mechanical inventions. His house at Muntham was filled with ingenious machinery and devices contrived by himself. One room contained many lathes driven by machinery and capable of executing the most delicate and complicated work by means of special mechanism which Mr. Frankland employed. It was said that he was able to turn medals of hard

reserved for agricultural implements. In short, Muntham Court in Mr. Frankland's time was a museum of ingenious mechanical contrivances, and he employed quite a large staff of workmen. Soon after his death, however, which took place in 1805 at the age of eighty-five, his collection was dispersed at a public sale, some of the objects fetching very high prices. Mr. Frankland was unmarried, but Muntham remained with his family until





"COUNTRY LIFE."

END OF EAST YEW WALK.

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Captain F. W. Frankland, eldest son of the Reverend Roger Frankland, Canon of Wells, sold it to Mr. Thomas Fitzgerald, who again sold it in 1850 to the Dowager Marchioness of Bath. In Horsfield's "Sussex" will be found a pleasing view of the old house as it existed about the year 1830, showing it to have been a building of plain architectural features, standing in the midst of a rich sylvan country well sheltered by the hill behind. Here it may be remarked that to the south-east rises the remarkable height of Cissbury Hill, which commands a prospect of the coast from Beachy Head to Selsey, and that behind it to the north-east is the great tree-crowned height of Changtonbury, which looks out over a vast prospect in all directions.

The pictures which accompany this article show that Muntham Court in these days is a place of great and singular



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AN EFFECTIVE GARDEN FEATURE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

distinction. It is no longer the plain brick house which Mr. Frankland filled with his ingenious contrivances, for the Marchioness of Bath enlaced it with stone, heightened its gables, transformed it almost entirely and made it the characteristic edifice which stands so admirably in the midst of its quaint and attractive gardens. The cool hue of the structure contrasts favourably with the rich tone of the woodland behind and the dark character of the sombre yew. It is a picturesque and effective building, with some points of originality in its structure; but the general features are of the late Jacobean style, or, perhaps, in some respects, of the date of Queen Anne. The house, however, calls for little description, because from many points of view it is seen to advantage in the accompanying illustrations.

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THE DIGNITY OF YEWE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

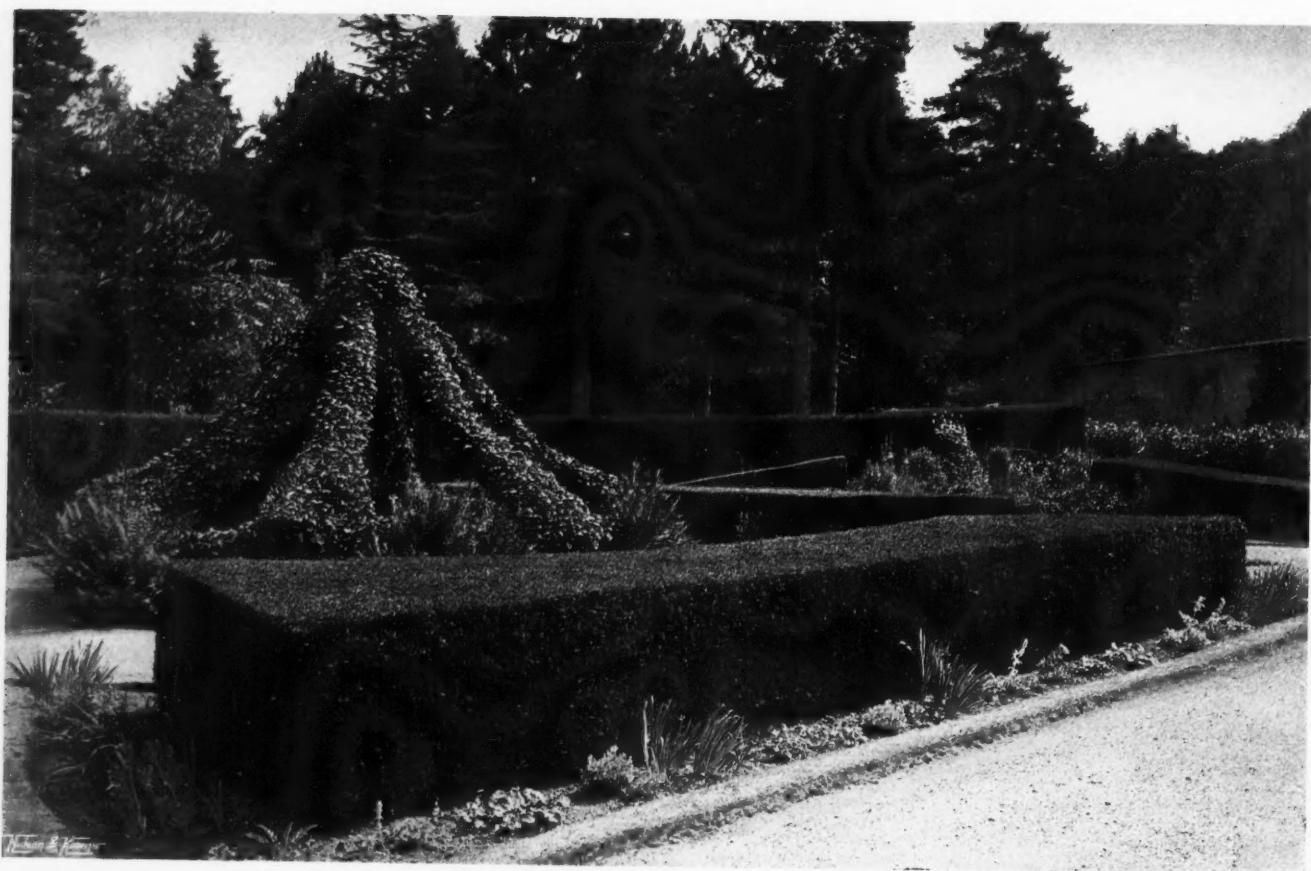




"COUNTRY LIFE."

EAST VIEW WALK.

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*BOX*

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*THE EAST GARDEN.*

"COUNTRY LIFE."





A GARDEN ORNAMENT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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SHADOWS OF THE ILEX TREE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Bacon, who said that a garden "was best to be square," would have liked that delightful yew court, with its many archways and secluded character, on the north front of Muntham Court. The dexterous hand of the topiary gardener, exhibiting his skill in the "ductile yew," has scored an unmistakable success in this fine and attractive feature. His work has been advantageously conducted in such pleasant surroundings, for all about are lovely coniferous and other ornamental trees, giving delightful contrasts of hue in the verdure of this enchanting place. It is mostly a garden of well-cut yews and shapely box that we have to admire; not that floral charm is absent or undistinguished, but that it finds its foil and contrast, and often its framework, in these sculptured masses of evergreen.

The descent from this green court on the north side brings the visitor by flights of steps to the enchanted garden region on the east, where bright flowers and fleshy-leaved yuccas are

enframed in an admirable hedging of box. Here, too, in the midst of the quadrangle, sits a pensive nymph, and beyond there is the shade of trees and the entrance to the noble vista through the yews, with all its solemn dignity, which is so finely illustrated in some of the pictures. The contrast of freely-growing ornamental trees with the wall-like exactitude of the yew and box hedges is very noteworthy, and lends great attraction to these gardens. But nothing is more remarkable than the long yew avenue entered beneath its archway and between the great

sentinel trees at its portal. We may see in another picture how the massive wall of this avenue—for a veritable wall it is—partly enframes with more archings another delightful garden, where carnations and other tall-growing flowers become more beautiful through the contrast of their surroundings. The enclosed garden was dear to the old garden-lovers, and so it must be to those who visit the beautiful pleasaunce at Muntham. The place



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ENCLOSED WITH YEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





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THE NORTH COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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BOX EDGING; EAST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bears the evidence of the judicious care of past owners and of the love which is bestowed upon the place by those who now have it in their care.

## TRAGEDIES OF BYGONE DAYS.

THE quiet churchyards of England contain many memorials of tragic deeds which cast a gloom over the country-side in bygone times. During the long winter nights these events would be discussed with bated breath, and the ghastly details related by sire to son. Even after many years had passed terror would linger among the sparsely populated districts. Some of the gravestones relate to the barbarous laws of the olden time. Women were for a long period in our history burned at the stake. An old slate headstone refers to this punishment in the church of St. Winwalve, East Portlemouth, Devonshire:

Here lieth the body of Richard Jarvis of Rickham, in this parish, who departed this life the 25th day of May, 1782, aged 79.  
Through poison strong he was cut off  
And brought to dust at last.  
It was by his apprentice girl,  
On whom there's sentence past.  
Oh! may all people warning take,  
For she was burned at a stake.

There are references to the murder of Jarvis in the columns of



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MUNTHAM COURT: THE WEST BAYS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

*Trewman's Flying Post*, an old Exeter newspaper. In the issue of the journal for August 2nd, 1782, are particulars of the end of the murderer. "Rebecca Downing was on Monday last," it is stated, "pursuant of her sentence, drawn on a sledge to the place of execution, attended by an amazing concourse of people, where, after being strangled, her body was burnt to ashes. While under sentence, and at the place of execution, she appeared totally ignorant of her situation, and insensible to every kind of admonition."

A much older law than the foregoing was brought into force over the murder of Mary Ashford, who was interred in the churchyard of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire. Dr. Booker, Vicar of Dudley, wrote the following inscription on the gravestone raised to her memory:

As a warning to female virtue,  
And a humble monument to female chastity;  
This stone marks the grave of  
Mary Ashford,  
Who, in the 20th year of her age, having  
Incautiously repaired to a scene of amusement,  
Was brutally violated and murdered  
On the 27th of May, 1817.

Lovely and chaste as the primrose pale,  
Rifled of virgin sweetness by a gale,  
Mary! the wretch who thee remorseless slew,  
Avenging wrath, who sleeps not, will pursue:  
For though the deed of blood was veiled in night,  
Will not the judge of all mankind do right?  
Fair blighted flower, the muse that weeps thy doom,  
Rears o'er thy murdered form this warning tomb.

A man named Abraham Thornton was tried at Warwick Assizes for the murder of Mary Ashford, and acquitted. The brother and next of kin of the deceased, not being satisfied with the verdict, sued out, as the law allowed him, an appeal against Thornton, by which he could be put on his trial again. The law allowed the appeal in case of murder, and it also gave option to the accused of having it tried by wager of law or by wager of battle. The brother of the unfortunate woman had taken no account of this, and accordingly, not only Mr. Ashford, but the judge, jury and bar were taken greatly aback, and stricken with dismay, when the accused, being requested to plead, took a paper from Mr. Reader, his counsel, and a pair of gloves, one of which he drew on, and, throwing the other on the ground, exclaimed, "Not guilty, and I am ready to defend the same with my body!" Lord Ellenborough on the bench appeared grave, and the accused looked amazed; so the court was adjourned to enable the judge to have an opportunity of conferring with his learned brethren. After several adjournments, Lord Ellenborough at last declared solemnly, but reluctantly, that wager of battle was still the law of the land, and that the accused had a right of appeal to it. An attempt was made by passing a short and speedy Act of Parliament to get rid of the law; but this was ruled impossible, as it would have been *ex post facto*, and people waited curiously to see the lists set up in the Tothill Fields. As Mr. Ashford refused to meet Thornton, he was obliged to cry "craven!" After that the appellor was allowed to go at large, and he could not be again tried by wager of law after having claimed wager of battle. An Act was passed in 1819 to prevent any further appeals for wager of battle. The historic burial-ground of Bury St. Edmunds contains many curious and interesting inscriptions. The following tells the sad tale of the low value placed on human life at the close of the eighteenth century:

### READER

Pause at this humble stone it records  
The fall of unguarded youth by the allure-  
ments of

vice and treacherous snares of seduction.

SARAH LLOYD

On the 23rd April, 1800, in the 22nd year of  
her age,

Suffered a just and ignominious death,  
For admitting her abandoned seducer in the  
dwelling-house of her mistress, on the 3rd of  
October, 1799, and becoming the instrument  
in his

hands of the crime of robbery and  
housebreaking.

These were her last words:

"May my example be a warning to thousands."

Connected with the fate of smugglers are some curious epitaphs. Not far from Bournemouth is the village of Kinson, a noted place in the past for smugglers. The church tower, an old altar tomb and one or two graves were used for concealing the contraband goods. In the churchyard a tombstone bearing a quaint inscription records a fatal fight with Revenue men and some local smugglers. It reads as follows:

To the Memory of  
Robert Trotman,

Late of Rowl in the county of Wilts.

Who was barbarously murdered on the shore near Poole,  
The 24th March, 1765.

A little tea, one leaf I did not steal,  
For guiltless bloodshed I to God appeal;  
Put tea in one scale, human blood in 'tother,  
And think what 'tis to slay a harmless brother.

On a gravestone in Patcham Churchyard is an allusion to a tragic death, another link with old smuggling days. The inscription states:

Sacred to the Memory

of

Daniel Scales,

who was unfortunately shot on Tuesday evening  
November 7th, 1796.

Alas! swift flew the fatal lead,  
Which pierced through the young man's head,  
He instant fell, resigned his breath,  
And closed his languid eyes on death,  
And you who to this stone draw near  
Oh! pray let fall the pitying tear,  
From this sad instance may we all  
Prepare to meet Jehovah's call.

The real story of Scales' death was written by Walter Gale, the schoolmaster of Mayfield. "Daniel Scales was a desperate smuggler," says Gale; "and one night he, with many more, was



coming from Brighton, heavily laden, when the Excise officers and soldiers fell in with them. The smugglers fled in all directions; a riding officer, as such persons were called, met the man, and called upon him to surrender his booty, which he refused to do. The officer knew that he was too good a man for him, for they had tried it out before; so he shot Daniel in the head."

In All Saints' Churchyard, Hastings, a gravestone on a smuggler bears the following inscription:

This Stone  
Sacred to the memory of  
Joseph Swain Fisherman  
was erected at the expense of  
the members of the friendly  
Society of Hastings,  
in commiseration of his cruel and  
untimely death, and as a record of  
the public indignation at the need-  
less and sanguinary violence of  
which he was the unoffending victim.

He was shot by George England, one  
of the sailors employed in the Coast-  
Blockade service in open day on the  
13th March, 1821, and almost instantly  
expir'd, in the 29th year of his age  
leaving a widow and five small children  
to lament his loss.

The history of Sussex contains numerous items bearing on this theme. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century two Custom House officers were murdered by smugglers, under circumstances too horrible to record here. In 1749 Sir Michael Forster presided over a Special Commission held at Colchester, to try seven smugglers implicated in the crime. They were convicted, and all hanged and suspended in chains in different parts of the country, with the exception of one, who died the night before the execution.

Two Danish soldiers, on their voyage to Hull to join the service of the Prince of Orange, quarrelled, and, having been marched to Beverley with the troops, sought a private meeting to settle their differences with the sword, when one was slain, and the other for causing his death was beheaded. On the south side of St. Mary's Church, Beverley, an oval tablet has two swords crossed and the following lines:

Here two young Danish souldiers lye,  
The one in quarrell chanc'd to die;  
The other's head, by their own Law,  
With Sword was sever'd at one Blow  
December the 23d,  
1689.

This is a curious instance of a foreign law having power on English soil. Many examples of epitaphs placed over the remains of murdered persons come under our notice, but they are more of melancholy than historical interest, and do not come within the scope of our present paper.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

**B**EFORE us lies one of those books which scarcely can be called important, but which to the casual reader yield a considerable amount of amusement. It is *Phrases and Names, their Origins and Meanings*, by Trench H. Johnson (Werner Laurie). The author describes it as partaking of the nature of an encyclopædia in which verbal embellishments have been studiously avoided. He claims that no other book of the same kind has been written. We have an excellent Dictionary of Phrase and Fable and several slang dictionaries, but this book is evidently meant to occupy a place between them. After reading it through, we may say at once that the conclusion arrived at is that Mr. Johnson has struck upon an excellent idea, but that his volume requires a vast amount of correction and improvement before it is fitted to take its place as a book of reference; and the first point is that it contains a number of absolute "howlers," as, for instance, the following:

**ADDISON OF THE NORTH.**—The literary sobriquet of Henry Fielding, author of "The Man of Feeling," on account of the purity and elegance of his style.

**Poor Mackenzie!** His shade might well feel flattered by having his works attributed to Henry Fielding, while, on the other hand, the entry would seem to show that he himself is absolutely forgotten. There are a number of such mistakes in the volume which seem to speak of a certain lack of reading and intelligence in the author. We will give another example to make this point clear. About Wardour Street we are told that it is named after "Wardour Castle, the seat of the ground landlord, Lord Arundel of Wardour." Of course, the phrase which required explanation was not the name of the street, but Wardour Street English, used for the first time, if we mistake not, by the *Saturday Review* to describe the sham archaic prose of William Morris. Again, the words "Leading Article (or Leader)" receive an explanation which does not touch upon what is in all probability the real one:

**LEADING ARTICLE (OR LEADER).**—There are three reasons for this term applied to a large-type newspaper article. It is supposed to be written by the chief of the literary staff, the editor; it leads off the foreign and all other important news on the inside pages of the paper; and it is intended to lead public opinion according to the party views maintained by the journal in question.

Press men generally assume, and most likely they are right, that none of these reasons is the true one, but that printers call the article the "leader" because it is leaded, just in the same way as they call another article a "turnover," because it turns over on to the next page or column. We are afraid that the deduction to be drawn from some of the entries is that the author is something of a misogynist. A "Bachelor Girl," for instance, is:

One who lives in her own rooms, belongs to a woman's club, and considers herself superior to what is called home influence—a distinctly modern creation.

The phrase "New Woman" is thus described:

**NEW WOMAN.**—A term which came into vogue during the early days of the modern bicycling craze. The New Woman disported herself abroad in knickerbockers, and generally made herself ridiculous in the eyes of all sensible men. Latterly she has returned to the obscurity whence she sprang.

It will be well for Mr. Johnson also to seek a similar obscurity if the "New Woman" knows anything of his haunts, for he throws down the following challenge to the Suffragette:

**SUFFRAGETTE.**—If this latter-day term possesses any etymological significance whatever, it expresses the diminutive of one who claims the suffrage or the right, from the Latin *suffragio*, to vote. A suffragette is, in brief, a woman who ought to know better. Eager to take upon herself the responsibilities of citizenship on a common footing with the male orders of creation, she cannot but shirk those which rightly belong to her own state.

Our investigations next carry us to the word "bloomers," which has this note attached to it:

**BLOOMERS.**—After Mrs. Ann Bloomer of New York, who introduced the original nondescript style of "New Woman" in 1849.

Some of Mr. Johnson's explanations are of doubtful accuracy. Of Rotten Row, for instance, he says:

**ROTTEN ROW.**—This name is a survival of the days when French was the language of the Court. Properly *route du roi*, it is literally "route of the King," and meant the King's drive across the park.

But another explanation is that the name comes from the days when ratting was a fashionable amusement; even in the eighteenth century the English "ratten" or "rotten" was a common name for the rat. However, it must be admitted that Mr. Johnson has been successful in collecting an extraordinary amount of out-of-the-way information. Colloquial and cant phrases have undergone a very remarkable change since the introduction of railways, telephones and telegraphs. These inventions having led to the evolution of a vocabulary of their own, it has superseded that created by the older means of communication. He points out with great truth that we have obtained a very large proportion of them from America. If we take almost any page we shall find something curious. For instance, on the word "ginger" he says:

**GINGER.**—Red-haired people are said to be *ginger* because Guinevere, the Queen at the Court of King Arthur, had red hair.

"Gone over to the majority" has this explanation:

**GONE OVER TO THE MAJORITY.**—A Parliamentary phrase equally, if more generally, applied to one who has passed from the scene of his life's labours to the spirit world. Ancient and modern authors contain passages in the latter connection. The Rev. Robert Blair in "The Grave" says: " 'Tis long since Death had the majority."

And "Gone to the Devil" this:

**GONE TO THE DEVIL.**—From the two-fold circumstance that money lost through lawyers would surely be spent by them at their regular resort, the celebrated "Devil Tavern," hard by Temple Bar, and the not unusual answer tendered by a subordinate to a caller at a place of business in Fleet Street that his master had "gone to the 'Devil.'"

Many readers will remember a passage in "The Fortunes of Nigel," of which this might almost be a paraphrase. "Gone to the Dogs" has this note:

**GONE TO THE DOGS.**—Money that has been squandered uselessly, as the remains of a feast in Eastern countries are thrown to the dogs instead of being given to the poor. A vicious man is said to have gone to the dogs because in the East social outcasts are often worried by ravenous dogs that prowl about the streets by night.

Mr. Johnson is not always careful of grammar or even of sense in his entries. He defines "spinster," for instance, as "a maiden lady, so called from the distaff or spindle, the regular occupation of an unmarried female." How a distaff or spindle can be a regular occupation it passes us to understand. Much is omitted. For example, the adjective "ripping" is omitted, while "rip," a word that has almost passed out of use, is included. It would add very greatly to the value of this work if dates and authorities were given, as a great many definitions seem to have been simply evolved from the inner consciousness of the author. In spite of all these faults, however, there is the making of a very interesting and useful book in this crude volume.

## FROM THE FARMS.

### CLEANLINESS IN DAIRY WORK.

IT is to be feared that only a comparatively small proportion of those who make butter realise the immense importance of scrupulous cleanliness, and few of them know what careful precautions are necessary to produce butter of the very best quality. A few days ago the writer had the opportunity of watching the work done in one of the most perfect dairies in England. When we say perfect, we do not mean that it is a place of show, of marble walls and tiles and other ornaments which are frequently used to embellish the dairy. On the contrary, the steading is an old-fashioned one. The cows are housed in buildings that are probably two or three hundred years old. In the barns, at any rate, are beams of oak which proclaim the antiquity of the place, and the beautiful roofs bear the marks of equal age. Thus it is no modern establishment, but has been made efficient by intelligently directed effort. After all, the requirements of a cowhouse are simple enough. There must, in the first place, be a liberal provision for fresh air, light and water. At present, however, we are only concerned with the regulations made to provide cleanliness. In this case it was ensured by a liberal provision of litter, and by the comparatively short space between the manger and the drain laid to carry away all liquid. That it was effective was proved by the state of the cows, which, though not groomed in any way, were most exceptionally clean. It was evident that they had not become contaminated, as so often happens, by lying in filth. In the next place, scrupulous cleanliness was exercised in the operation of milking. The men are taught methodically to wash their hands and also the cow's udder before beginning. Then the cow is milked into a moderately-sized vessel over which a piece of spotlessly clean muslin has been placed. When the cow is finished her milk is emptied into a larger vessel, and again has to pass through clean muslin, so that it is scarcely possible that the milk can be in any way contaminated. We need not insist upon the importance of this. If contamination once begins, neither salt nor any other material can keep it from spreading at an immense rate, and the prodigal use of salt in butter-making is in too many cases only used as a means of covering defects in production. Before going to the cowshed we had an opportunity of witnessing the actual churning of the cream that had been ripening for the purpose. We need not say that in an establishment of this kind everything was absolutely spotless, and, moreover, the construction of the floor and the drain for surplus water was perfect. The dairy faces the north, but it is exceedingly well lighted, and looks like a place that can be kept absolutely clean with a minimum amount of labour. Its scrupulousness, indeed, would have delighted Mrs. Poyser. Only a small quantity of butter was being made in a small churn on the occasion of our visit. It was most carefully washed four times, once with brine, which made us inclined to think that Mr. Lloyd, our analyst, was not exactly right the other day in attributing the lack of aroma in butter from another private dairy to overwashing. It was much more likely to have been caused by some little deficiency in the food. This butter came out extraordinarily well coloured for the season of the year, and the owner of the cows attributed this entirely to his feeding. The butter looked dry enough, but it was put into a Normandy Delaitouse machine and the last of the water extracted. We may say that this was the best butter that we have had analysed for COUNTRY LIFE, and after watching the method of producing it, it was not at all surprising to find that excellent results had been obtained by Mr. Lloyd.

### SOIL-INOCULATION FOR LEGUMINOSÆ.

Professor Bottomley of King's College, who has had a great deal of correspondence in regard to this subject, has drawn up a number of directions which cannot fail to be of the utmost interest to our readers, and we have great pleasure in printing them:

1. Only leguminous plants, such as peas, beans, clovers, vetches, sainfoin, lucerne, etc., benefit by inoculation, and separate cultures are needed for each variety.

2. Inoculation produces the best results on *poor* soil. The presence of nitrates in rich soils prevents the formation of root-nodules.

3. The organisms only provide *nitrogen* for the crops. Land must be dressed with phosphates when these are deficient. Leguminous plants, if inoculated, can be grown in sand alone if phosphates and potash are added.

4. The inoculating material for producing the culture solutions is most effective when used fresh. Will applicants therefore state probable date of sowing, and kind of legume, then the material can be sent fresh about a week before wanted.

5. Soil inoculation is a *success*, as shown by four typical examples:

(a) *Norfolk.—Peas*: Inoculated ready for market three weeks earlier and 50 per cent. more prolific than uninoculated.

(b) *Yorkshire.—Beans*: Soil—no manure for ten years. Inoculated crop 43 per cent. better than uninoculated, shown by weighing produce of each.

(c) *Scotland.—Lucerne*: Crop dressed with 2cwt. nitrate of soda per acre gave 9 tons 8cwt. green produce. Inoculated crop *without any nitrogenous manure* yielded 12 tons 5cwt.

(d) *Ireland.—Clover*: Inoculated produced a good crop in district where said locally impossible to grow clover.

6. A pamphlet, giving further details of soil inoculation and tabulating the results of last year's experiments, is in course of preparation.

7. As no charge is made for the inoculating materials, users are asked to have a small non-inoculated plot alongside the inoculated in order to compare the results, and in due course to report these results.

Those who desire to try inoculation may like to know something about the directions for its use. Suppose that packages are sent that will produce one gallon of culture solution. Take a bucket or tub, clean and scald it out thoroughly, place in it one gallon of good pure water (preferably rain-water, which has been well boiled and allowed to cool), add the contents of package No. 1, and stir until the salts are dissolved. Then carefully open package No. 2 and drop the enclosed cotton-wool into the solution, giving another stir. Cover the tub with a clean moist cloth to protect the solution from dust, and keep in a warm place.

After twenty-four hours add the contents of package No. 3, again stirring, and allow the mixture to stand for another twenty-four hours. The solution should now be cloudy, and is ready for use. If still clear, further time should be given (not exceeding one or two days) for sufficient growth of the bacteria to produce the cloudiness.

**TO INOCULATE SEED.**—Take enough culture solution to moisten the seed. This may be done either by placing the seed in the solution or by sprinkling the solution on the seed and turning until all the seeds are moistened. Then spread out the seeds in a *shady* place (never in direct sunshine) until they are perfectly dry. Plant just as you would ordinary seed. If thoroughly dried the inoculated seed will keep for several weeks, but the culture solution must be used fresh, as it will not keep, after ready for use, more than forty-eight hours.

**TO INOCULATE SOIL.**—Take enough dry soil so that the solution will merely moisten it. Mix thoroughly so that all the particles of soil are moistened. Thoroughly mix this soil with four or five times as much soil, then spread thinly and evenly over the prepared ground just as if spreading a fertiliser, and rake or harrow in immediately.

**TO INOCULATE GROWING CROPS.**—Mix one part culture solution and fifty parts water—say half-pint culture solution to three gallons water—and apply directly to roots of plants by means of a watering-can in gardens and water-cart in fields.

In gardens where only a small amount of culture solution is required for seed inoculation, it is best to take a proportion of the materials—say one quarter—and produce one quart of culture solution for the seeds. Then when the plants are from 3in. to 6in. high, prepare the remainder (three quarts) and apply diluted as above directly to the roots. This double inoculation will give the best results.

We hope that any of our readers who have made practical trial of inoculation will be so kind as to communicate the results to us.

### STERILISED MILK.

The meeting between Mr. John Burns and the deputation from the Infant Health Society left the question of sterilising milk an open one. There are two views of this question. One is that "raw milk" is fit only for a very strong stomach, and that milk should be boiled to make it digestible. In that way, of course, the bacteria would be destroyed and the chance of disease being transmitted reduced to a minimum. But then there are others who declare that boiled milk is indigestible, and, unfortunately, the facts do not tell decisively either on one side or the other. Mr. Burns himself seemed to be perplexed. He could not tell whether the evils complained of arose from the milk being sterilised or from its not being sterilised. He was inclined to think, however, that no great harm would be done



by legalising the sterilisation of milk. There are several establishments in London at the present moment where sterilised milk is sold, and as the law stands those who sell this milk are guilty of offence. A good deal can be said in favour of refrigeration, which was warmly advocated by more than one member of the deputation. Sir Thomas Barlow advocated cooling very strenuously. He considered it to be well known that children

fed on sterilised milk developed scurvy and rickets, and as an alternative he proposed that milk should be cooled down immediately it was taken from the cow, kept cool and then put into vessels that had been properly sterilised. When doctors disagree so widely it would appear that the best course would be to appoint a Select Committee of the House of Commons to enquire into the whole conditions of the milk supply.

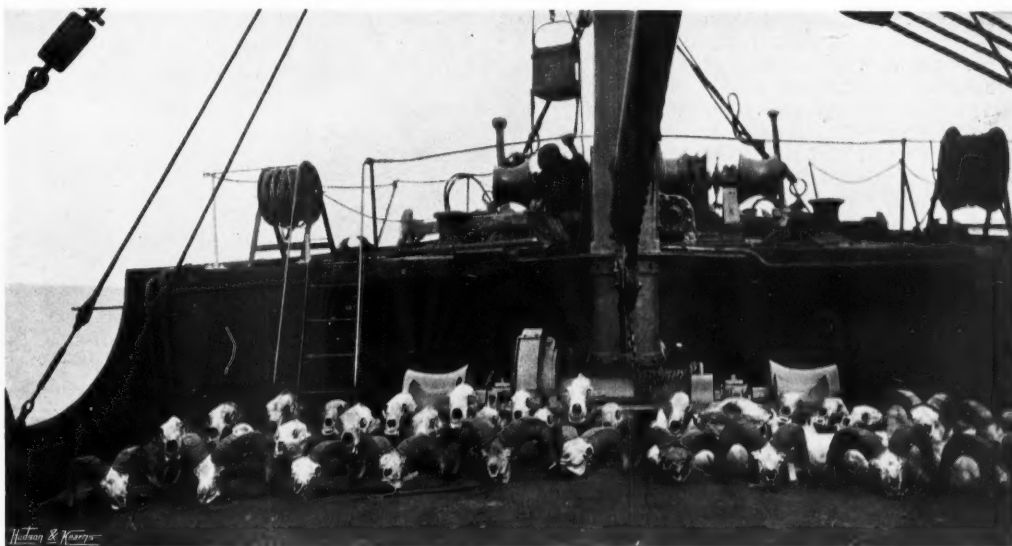
## SHOOTING.

### WILD SHEEP IN KAMCHATKA AND SIBERIA.

**K**AMCHATKA and the adjoining coasts of North-East Siberia may justly be called a home of the wild sheep. Here roam, in countless flocks, mountain sheep of the species commonly known to sportsmen and scientific naturalists as the *Ovis nivicola*. In sporting parlance it is customary to speak of "a band" of wild sheep; but the term "flock" will convey to the reader a better idea of the actual sight which may greet the hunter's eyes in certain unmolested districts of Kamchatka to-day.

In the mind of a sportsman who is accustomed to shooting in most parts of Asia or America the two words wild sheep will conjure up visions of endless climbing over rocks and crags while in quest of this most elusive mountain quarry. To the man who has traversed parts of Kamchatka early in spring the quest has been reduced from hard work to a mere picnic, and the sight of sheep on the hillsides is daily accepted as a matter of course. Moreover, the actual amount of hill-climbing required to make a bag of sheep is absurdly small, and the reason for this is as follows: In early spring, when high mountains and valleys inland lie deep under snow, the Kamchatkan sheep wend their way down to the coast-line. Along the Bering Sea Coast the shores of Kamchatka and Siberia are indented with innumerable bays and land-locked arms of the sea. In such places during the month of May or early June vast numbers of *Ovis nivicola* may be seen thickly dotted over the low foothills and faces of cliff overhanging the sea. But even more remarkable is the fact that these animals regularly frequent the beaches and sandy shores, coming right down to the water's edge in quest of the early blades of grass or wild garlic which first spring up a little above high-water mark. It is then that the idle native sets out in a boat and often kills all the sheep he requires by

actually shooting them from the boat. The sight which greets the eyes of a stranger at this season of the year is positively bewildering if viewed from the deck of a ship while sailing close inshore. It seems incredible that those numerous groups of small moving objects thickly dotted along the rock faces can all be sheep, extending as they do practically the whole way along the coasts from Cape Lopatka in Southern Kamchatka almost up to the Anadyr River in Siberia, a distance of more than 1,000 miles as the crow flies, and probably three times as far if we



SKULLS OF KAMCHATKAN AND SIBERIAN BEARS AND SHEEP.

follow the actual coast-line. In shape and size, both as regards his body or horn measurements, the *Ovis nivicola* closely resembles his nearly allied species, the handsome *Ovis dalli*, or white sheep of Alaska. The former are, however, in winter and spring coats, of a dark cream colour. Their new summer coat is at first of a very dark brown, but this gradually gets lighter as winter approaches, and the hair grows long. The meat, like that of most other wild sheep, is particularly good eating, except at a certain season of the year when, in early

spring, the sheep feed on wild garlic, which gives the flesh a strong, unpleasant flavour, rendering it unfit for the palate of anyone save the most hardened Spaniard. There is so much similarity in the actual relating of any individual stalks or shooting episodes that we are inclined to evade this form of writing, lest we inflict a sense of boredom upon our readers; but one episode may be quoted here to show in what profusion the game abounds in Kamchatka, and with what ease a bag can be made.

Soon after daylight one morning early in June, I stood watching the efforts of my sole attendant to kindle a fire composed of wet driftwood gathered on the shore preparatory to cooking breakfast. The camp, consisting of two small tents, was pitched on the beach a few yards above high-water mark. Immediately behind the tents a small valley, less than rooyds. in width, extended from the shore and wound its way far back into the mountains. On either side of this valley rose hills reaching to a height of some 1,500ft., with sides not unpleasantly steep for climbing. The hillsides and valley still bore a thick covering of



THE AUTHOR AND THREE KAMCHATKAN SHEEP.

snow. While pitching camp on the previous evening we had noticed a well-worn sheep trail in the snow which, winding down from one hill, crossed the valley at a point less than 100 yds. from our tents, and finally led up the face of the opposite hill. Happening to glance at the top of one hill, my eyes were greeted with the by no means unusual sight of a large band of sheep standing, apparently, in contemplation of the sea in front and the valley below them. A happy inspiration seized me, that possibly it was their intention to cross from one hilltop to the other, and probably by the above-mentioned trail. Such, indeed, proved to be the case. Hastily seizing a telescope, I soon discovered that the band consisted of no less than twenty-two rams, four of which carried exceedingly good heads, and, moreover, that they were all slowly but surely wending their way down the trail. In a few seconds the fire was stamped out and covered with snow. But the problem with which we were faced was where to hide, since nothing showed above the snow sufficiently large to hide a mouse. Our only chance lay in taking shelter behind a tent, and here we crouched, trusting that by some good chance the sheep might not notice the tents. Here, indeed, fortune favoured us, as a gentle breeze started blowing from the hills to the ocean, and our tents against the white background merely looked like big piles of snow. It was curious to note how the four big rams, which seemed rather suspicious of the situation, kept urging the younger ones in advance. Ever and anon they would butt the stragglers in the hind-quarters, thus driving them in single file along the trail, with the four old ones forming a kind of rear guard. Consequently it was impossible to get a clear shot at a big head as they advanced towards us down the hillside. The only alternative was to wait on the chance of a shot as they crossed the valley opposite to our tents. Although scarcely able to hope for such a stroke of luck, I imagined my chance would come if they followed the trail across the valley. This they eventually did, keeping the same order as before, and actually passing within 100 yds. of our tents without noticing them. My original intention was to shoot only one ram which carried the largest head, and, as usual, I had placed five cartridges in the magazine of my Mannlicher. As the largest ram came into full view around the corner of the tent I took steady aim and pressed the trigger. The result was a misfire, and a dreadful suspicion rushed through my mind, which was forcibly confirmed a moment afterwards. A short time previously many of my bullets had been submerged in water owing to a boat getting filled, and almost sunk, and possibly the majority of my cartridges were worthless. The sharp click of the falling striker caused the sheep to stop for a second and look towards us. Hastily, and as noiselessly as possible, I reloaded, and fired again, with the same result as



A MORNING'S BAG BEFORE BREAKFAST.

before. This started the whole band, and facing about in their tracks they set off at a gallop for the hill whence they had come, but in this case the old rams became leaders in a stampede. My feelings can be better imagined than described. Mad with rage, and scarcely stopping to think of my actions, I worked the bolt again with frenzied energy and, aiming at the leading ram, fired once more. On this occasion the cartridge was good, and

the leading ram fell in his former tracks. So close were the others following him that two jumped his body lying on the ground. Once more, and yet again, I almost mechanically went through the loading motions, and fired. But it was not until we saw the three leading rams lying dead on the snow, the last one being at a distance of 320 yds. away, that I realised and was sorry for what I had done. My sole consolation lay in the fact that for one who does not consider himself a good rifle-shot the performance was a fair exhibition of shooting. And in extenuation, let it be mentioned that the slayer had previously only killed two other sheep in this land of plenty, nor did he afterwards kill another, although the opportunity often presented itself during the remainder of his trip in Kamchatka. Some little time was occupied in photographing the dead sheep, ere we awoke to the fact that breakfast would now be by no means unwelcome. But for us breakfast was to be indefinitely postponed on this memorable day. Looking once more at the

hilltop over which the last sheep had disappeared less than half-an-hour before, I saw three large bears walking on the snow, and all making their way into a dense patch of alder brushwood. Knowing that these animals would probably spend the midday hours resting in these alders, I determined to try to bag one of them. At this moment my Russian hunter, who had been absent since daylight, returned to camp; so, taking him with

me, I set off on a climb of some 1,500 ft. after the bears. The deep snow, slightly melting on top, made our climb none too easy travelling, and, to make matters worse, on the hill summit brushwood grew like grass in a jungle. We were forcing our way through this dense tangle of sticks, going towards where we had last seen the bears, when suddenly I felt a touch from the Russian, who followed me, and who was gifted with a marvellous pair of eyes. Pointing over my shoulder at something in the brush, he whispered, "Big bear; shoot quick."

Dropping on my knees, and struggling to disentangle my rifle from among innumerable twigs, I saw five paces distant the head and shoulders of a large bear. He was standing motionless in the thick alders, looking intently towards us and evidently listening. Cautiously and rapidly I aimed at a small part of his chest just visible between the sticks and fired. He gave vent to that peculiar grunting squeal uttered by most bears when wounded,

A FINE RAM (*OVIS NIVICOLA*).



and dashed off madly through the brush, followed by another bullet from my rifle. Knowing that a miss was impossible at such close quarters, we scrambled after him through the brush, and there some 20yds. further on he lay dead on the edge of a snow-slide. Far below we could see our tents in the valley. The Russian was a man of many resources, and at once suggested that, with a little help, he could get the bear almost into camp. All the assistance he needed was my help to roll the great brute to the steepest part of the snow-slide, which led sheer down into the valley. Then with a rope he tied the animal's four legs together, and, seating himself astride on the carcass, proceeded to toboggan down the slide, steering his strange toboggan by some extraordinary manipulation of his feet and the ropes. Once only did he run out of the course when, halfway down the hill, he lost control of the steering and was precipitated into a big clump of alders, whence it taxed our combined efforts to dislodge the toboggan and start him going afresh. He finished the last lap in great style, and finally as he reached the valley far below me I saw a fine mix up. The Russian failed to throw himself free in time, with the result that he and the dead bear rolled over and over each other before finally coming to a stop on the level ground. He presented a curious spectacle when I reached the valley a few minutes later, to find him smothered in snow and plentifully besprinkled with blood from the bear, but still as ever smiling and rather proud of his performance. This necessitated a further application of my camera. And when finally we had skinned and carried our last trophy into camp, I felt that we had not made such a bad bag before breakfast. Who would complain after such a day as this, even if the afore-said breakfast did not arrive till so late in the afternoon that it took the place of the usual two or three daily meals combined in one? Even then, although our *chef* was no *ordon bleu*, I have eaten many meals which tasted worse than our belated breakfast.

C. E. RADCLYFFE.

## MOVEMENTS OF WOODCOCK.

NOW that evidence has pretty well come in with regard to the distribution of woodcock during the shooting season which is passing, it is quite clear that we were right in regarding their distribution during the last two years, when they were in more than their usual number in the East of England and Scotland, as quite abnormal. Some people held the view that the woodcock were changing their habit in this respect, just as we know very well that they have changed their habit in regard to breeding in far greater numbers in these islands than they used to do formerly, and foretold that we were only at the beginning of an era when the woodcock would be constantly plentiful in the East, and proportionally fewer in their old haunts in the West of England and in Ireland. The experience of the present winter has been such as to refute that view altogether. For some time it did look, indeed, as if it were only to be confirmed, for the cock were in very good numbers in the East of our islands right up to Christmas. At the same time they were in very fair numbers in Ireland generally. But

on Christmas Night the heavy snow came, and where the snow was heavy the woodcock vanished. We have already noticed that as a result of the snowfall over the East the Southern and Western coverts of England immediately had an accession of woodcock which was very marked, and in Ireland, as a native of that country informed us, with a patriotic pride which perhaps produced, as it justified, a little harmless exaggeration, "there was a woodcock under every bush."

## THE CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN FROM THEM.

The conclusion seems to be, then, not that the comparatively large numbers of the woodcock in the counties near the East Coast during the last two years are evidence of any regular or established change of habit in the birds, but merely that in remaining in the East they have been influenced by the unusual mildness of the weather in the last two winters. No doubt the birds arrive first on the East Coast; and there, as it seems, they stay until the weather grows cold and they are unable to find food. When that happens an inherited instinct impels them Westward. During the two winters previous to this, the weather never did become sufficiently cold to make food supplies scarce for them in the East. They therefore had no special motive to move West, and remained, in more than usual number, near their alighting-places. This year, up to Christmas, the story was the same. Then, actually on Christmas Night, came the snow, and away the woodcock went to their Western haunts, so that, as the patriotic Irishman averred, "there was a bird under every bush."

## THE OPINION OF ONE WHO HAS STUDIED THE SUBJECT.

One of these Irishmen, who has made a special study of the woodcock in his own country, where the opportunities for such study are more than commonly numerous, gives it as his assured view that the weather to the East is the prime influence on the general movements of the birds. Other influences, of course, have effect on their more local distribution, bringing them in off the hills into the woods or *vice versa*, and so on; but he has no doubt whatever that when there is severe weather to the East the woodcock come pushing on before it to the West, until they come "to the big sea," as he expresses it—that is to say, the open Atlantic on the West of Ireland. Then, they either stop, or fly out, perhaps, for a while over the sea, but, finding no resting-place, come back, and so it is that the harder the weather the more birds are found in the West of Ireland. In connection with his idea of the birds flying out over "the big sea" and coming back (although the idea must be largely speculative), we may draw attention to the very remarkable instance recorded in this paper some months ago of a woodcock, which had been knocked down by a shot into some water and probably stunned, rising again off the surface and flying away after five minutes or so, apparently finding no difficulty in rising off the water, and not having its feathers so soaked as to make flight a difficulty. We do not mean to suggest any probability that woodcock ever normally rest on the water, but merely to point out that it is not wholly impossible.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE CULTIVATION OF WILD RICE.

SIR,—I have read your article (January 12th) on attracting wild duck with much interest, and should esteem it a favour if any of your numerous readers could inform me through your valuable journal if anyone in England has succeeded in cultivating wild rice, which is said to be the greatest attraction for wildfowl, and, if so, where reliable seed can be procured.—A. E. SEATON, Gothenburg, Sweden.

## ON THE GREEN.

## SOME CURIOSITIES OF SCORING.

I WAS met a few days ago, on the Ashdown Forest Golf Course, by a gentleman with a face like that of the Knight of the Ruful Countenance, and for a fully sufficient reason. He had been playing with another who was giving him odds: at one hole, which can be reached in one shot from the tee, but a hole with a very tricky green, so that with the best of play a man may often take four strokes to it, he had a stroke given him; he did the hole in a faultless three, and yet he lost it. The giver of odds had holed it in one. That such things are allowed to happen is enough to shake the faith of the most pious in the just government of the world.

It must have happened to nearly every man, in the course of a golfing career of any respectable length, to indulge in pleasant private speculation on the amazing result of adding together his lowest score for each hole of a course on which he is a constant player. It is a result which is frankly surprising, and no golfer of imagination can refrain from the attempt at realising what the effect on the golfing world would be if, just once in a lifetime, he were to happen to combine all these lowest possibles in one extraordinary round. Unhappily these combinations of eighteen holes do not occur, and the world has to satisfy itself with such sensations as it can extract from scores like that surprising one of 69 lately recorded, on the full course at St. Andrews, by Jack Kirkaldy. Surprising as that is, it is as nothing in comparison with the score which even a very moderate golfer who plays much on that or on any other eighteen-hole green can make up by taking the aggregate of his lowest scores at each hole. But though a combination of eighteen of these lowest possibles has never been recorded yet, some very remarkable series of three or four consecutive holes have been accomplished. The lowest score for four holes which the present writer ever heard of was

made by Mr. E. Balfour-Melville at St. Andrews, namely, nine for the last two holes of the outgoing half and the first two of the home-coming. The Short-Hole-Out he did in one, the End hole in three, the tenth in three, and the Short-Hole-In in three. This was not, however, I think, in a competition, but in one of those matches described as "friendly," when it did not much matter. On the same course Mr. McEwen also did a remarkable series of four holes—the last four—against Mr. H. W. Forster, and this, if I remember right, was in one of the annual handicap tournaments—I think the Calcutta Cup. The total score for the four holes was fourteen, made up of a three at each except the difficult seventeenth, at which he had a five. Before commencing this succession he was a hole or two down; at the end, as is not wonderful, he was up, and won the match. A yet more notable series of four, because made in an actual scoring competition, was recorded by Mr. S. H. Fry at Sandwich last year when playing for the St. George's Cup. He had a three at the fifth hole, a two at the "Maiden," a three again at the next, and again a two at "Hades." Yet, withal, he did not win, but was only just beaten. Probably this is the most remarkable series of holes ever recorded in a score competition. It is quite possible that more wonderful things even than these which are set down here have been done in the "friendly" match, and the world very likely might never hear of them—though it is improbable that the friends of the perpetrator would not have heard—but had any other feat so singular been done in a scoring competition it would almost certainly have found its way into the publicity of print—therefore into fame.

Considering the proportion of holes in most courses which can be reached with a single shot from the tee, it is curious how seldom a hole is done in one—how seldom the statutory fine of a bottle of whisky to the caddie has to be forfeited. But what happens if the player be a zealous teetotaler? About the caddie

snow. While pitching camp on the previous evening we had noticed a well-worn sheep trail in the snow which, winding down from one hill, crossed the valley at a point less than 100 yds. from our tents, and finally led up the face of the opposite hill. Happening to glance at the top of one hill, my eyes were greeted with the by no means unusual sight of a large band of sheep standing, apparently, in contemplation of the sea in front and the valley below them. A happy inspiration seized me, that possibly it was their intention to cross from one hilltop to the other, and probably by the above-mentioned trail. Such, indeed, proved to be the case. Hastily seizing a telescope, I soon discovered that the band consisted of no less than twenty-two rams, four of which carried exceedingly good heads, and, moreover, that they were all slowly but surely wending their way down the trail. In a few seconds the fire was stamped out and covered with snow. But the problem with which we were faced was where to hide, since nothing showed above the snow sufficiently large to hide a mouse. Our only chance lay in taking shelter behind a tent, and here we crouched, trusting that by some good chance the sheep might not notice the tents. Here, indeed, fortune favoured us, as a gentle breeze started blowing from the hills to the ocean, and our tents against the white background merely looked like big piles of snow. It was curious to note how the four big rams, which seemed rather suspicious of the situation, kept urging the younger ones in advance. Ever and anon they would butt the stragglers in the hind-quarters, thus driving them in single file along the trail, with the four old ones forming a kind of rear guard. Consequently it was impossible to get a clear shot at a big head as they advanced towards us down the hillside. The only alternative was to wait on the chance of a shot as they crossed the valley opposite to our tents. Although scarcely able to hope for such a stroke of luck, I imagined my chance would come if they followed the trail across the valley. This they eventually did, keeping the same order as before, and actually passing within 100 yds. of our tents without noticing them. My original intention was to shoot only one ram which carried the largest head, and, as usual, I had placed five cartridges in the magazine of my Mannlicher. As the largest ram came into full view around the corner of the tent I took steady aim and pressed the trigger. The result was a misfire, and a dreadful suspicion rushed through my mind, which was forcibly confirmed a moment afterwards. A short time previously many of my bullets had been submerged in water owing to a boat getting filled, and almost sunk, and possibly the majority of my cartridges were worthless. The sharp click of the falling striker caused the sheep to stop for a second and look towards us. Hastily, and as noiselessly as possible, I reloaded, and fired again, with the same result as

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the leading ram fell in his former tracks. So close were the others following him that two jumped his body lying on the ground. Once more, and yet again, I almost mechanically went through the loading motions, and fired. But it was not until we saw the three leading rams lying dead on the snow, the last one being at a distance of 320 yds. away, that I realised and was sorry for what I had done. My sole consolation lay in the fact that for one who does not consider himself a good rifle-shot the performance was a fair exhibition of shooting. And in extenuation, let it be mentioned that the slayer had previously only killed two other sheep in this land of plenty, nor did he afterwards kill another, although the opportunity often presented itself during the remainder of his trip in Kamchatka. Some little time was occupied in photographing the dead sheep, ere we awoke to the fact that breakfast would now be by no means unwelcome. But for us breakfast was to be indefinitely postponed on this memorable day. Looking once more at the

hilltop over which the last sheep had disappeared less than half-an-hour before, I saw three large bears walking on the snow, and all making their way into a dense patch of alder brushwood. Knowing that these animals would probably spend the midday hours resting in these alders, I determined to try to bag one of them. At this moment my Russian hunter, who had been absent since daylight, returned to camp; so, taking him with

me, I set off on a climb of some 1,500 ft. after the bears. The deep snow, slightly melting on top, made our climb none too easy travelling, and, to make matters worse, on the hill summit brushwood grew like grass in a jungle. We were forcing our way through this dense tangle of sticks, going towards where we had last seen the bears, when suddenly I felt a touch from the Russian, who followed me, and who was gifted with a marvellous pair of eyes. Pointing over my shoulder at something in the brush, he whispered, "Big bear; shoot quick."

Dropping on my knees, and struggling to disentangle my rifle from among innumerable twigs, I saw five paces distant the head and shoulders of a large bear. He was standing motionless in the thick alders, looking intently towards us and evidently listening. Cautiously and rapidly I aimed at a small part of his chest just visible between the sticks and fired. He gave vent to that peculiar grunting squeal uttered by most bears when wounded,



A MORNING'S BAG BEFORE BREAKFAST.



A FINE RAM (OVIS NIVICOLA).

through my mind, which was forcibly confirmed a moment afterwards. A short time previously many of my bullets had been submerged in water owing to a boat getting filled, and almost sunk, and possibly the majority of my cartridges were worthless. The sharp click of the falling striker caused the sheep to stop for a second and look towards us. Hastily, and as noiselessly as possible, I reloaded, and fired again, with the same result as



and dashed off madly through the brush, followed by another bullet from my rifle. Knowing that a miss was impossible at such close quarters, we scrambled after him through the brush, and there some 20yds. further on he lay dead on the edge of a snow-slide. Far below we could see our tents in the valley. The Russian was a man of many resources, and at once suggested that, with a little help, he could get the bear almost into camp. All the assistance he needed was my help to roll the great brute to the steepest part of the snow-slide, which led sheer down into the valley. Then with a rope he tied the animal's four legs together, and, seating himself astride on the carcass, proceeded to toboggan down the slide, steering his strange toboggan by some extraordinary manipulation of his feet and the ropes. Once only did he run out of the course when, halfway down the hill, he lost control of the steering and was precipitated into a big clump of alders, whence it taxed our combined efforts to dislodge the toboggan and start him going afresh. He finished the last lap in great style, and finally as he reached the valley far below me I saw a fine mix up. The Russian failed to throw himself free in time, with the result that he and the dead bear rolled over and over each other before finally coming to a stop on the level ground. He presented a curious spectacle when I reached the valley a few minutes later, to find him smothered in snow and plentifully besprinkled with blood from the bear, but still as ever smiling and rather proud of his performance. This necessitated a further application of my camera. And when finally we had skinned and carried our last trophy into camp, I felt that we had not made such a bad bag before breakfast. Who would complain after such a day as this, even if the afore-said breakfast did not arrive till so late in the afternoon that it took the place of the usual two or three daily meals combined in one? Even then, although our *chef* was no *cordon bleu*, I have eaten many meals which tasted worse than our belated breakfast.

C. E. RADCLIFFE.

#### MOVEMENTS OF WOODCOCK.

NOW that evidence has pretty well come in with regard to the distribution of woodcock during the shooting season which is passing, it is quite clear that we were right in regarding their distribution during the last two years, when they were in more than their usual number in the East of England and Scotland, as quite abnormal. Some people held the view that the woodcock were changing their habit in this respect, just as we know very well that they have changed their habit in regard to breeding in far greater numbers in these islands than they used to do formerly, and foretold that we were only at the beginning of an era when the woodcock would be constantly plentiful in the East, and proportionally fewer in their old haunts in the West of England and in Ireland. The experience of the present winter has been such as to refute that view altogether. For some time it did look, indeed, as if it were only to be confirmed, for the cock were in very good numbers in the East of our islands right up to Christmas. At the same time they were in very fair numbers in Ireland generally. But

on Christmas Night the heavy snow came, and where the snow was heavy the woodcock vanished. We have already noticed that as a result of the snowfall over the East the Southern and Western coverts of England immediately had an accession of woodcock which was very marked, and in Ireland, as a native of that country informed us, with a patriotic pride which perhaps produced, as it justified, a little harmless exaggeration, "there was a woodcock under every bush."

#### THE CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN FROM THEM.

The conclusion seems to be, then, not that the comparatively large numbers of the woodcock in the counties near the East Coast during the last two years are evidence of any regular or established change of habit in the birds, but merely that in remaining in the East they have been influenced by the unusual mildness of the weather in the last two winters. No doubt the birds arrive first on the East Coast; and there, as it seems, they stay until the weather grows cold and they are unable to find food. When that happens an inherited instinct impels them Westward. During the two winters previous to this, the weather never did become sufficiently cold to make food supplies scarce for them in the East. They therefore had no special motive to move West, and remained, in more than usual number, near their alighting-places. This year, up to Christmas, the story was the same. Then, actually on Christmas Night, came the snow, and away the woodcock went to their Western haunts, so that, as the patriotic Irishman averred, "there was a bird under every bush."

#### THE OPINION OF ONE WHO HAS STUDIED THE SUBJECT.

One of these Irishmen, who has made a special study of the woodcock in his own country, where the opportunities for such study are more than commonly numerous, gives it as his assured view that the weather to the East is the prime influence on the general movements of the birds. Other influences, of course, have effect on their more local distribution, bringing them in off the hills into the woods or *vice versa*, and so on; but he has no doubt whatever that when there is severe weather to the East the woodcock come pushing on before it to the West, until they come "to the big sea," as he expresses it—that is to say, the open Atlantic on the West of Ireland. Then, they either stop, or fly out, perhaps, for a while over the sea, but, finding no resting-place, come back, and so it is that the harder the weather the more birds are found in the West of Ireland. In connection with his idea of the birds flying out over "the big sea" and coming back (although the idea must be largely speculative), we may draw attention to the very remarkable instances recorded in this paper some months ago of a woodcock, which had been knocked down by a shot into some water and probably stunned, rising again off the surface and flying away after five minutes or so, apparently finding no difficulty in rising off the water, and not having its feathers so soaked as to make flight a difficulty. We do not mean to suggest any probability that woodcock ever normally rest on the water, but merely to point out that it is not wholly impossible.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### THE CULTIVATION OF WILD RICE.

SIR,—I have read your article (January 12th) on attracting wild duck with much interest, and should esteem it a favour if any of your numerous readers could inform me through your valuable journal if anyone in England has succeeded in cultivating wild rice, which is said to be the greatest attraction for wildfowl, and, if so, where reliable seed can be procured.—A. E. SEATON, Gothenburg, Sweden.

## ON THE GREEN.

#### SOME CURIOSITIES OF SCORING.

I WAS met a few days ago, on the Ashdown Forest Golf Course, by a gentleman with a face like that of the Knight of the Ruful Countenance, and for a fully sufficient reason. He had been playing with another who was giving him odds: at one hole, which can be reached in one shot from the tee, but a hole with a very tricky green, so that with the best of play a man may often take four strokes to it, he had a stroke given him; he did the hole in a faultless three, and yet he lost it. The giver of odds had holed it in one. That such things are allowed to happen is enough to shake the faith of the most pious in the just government of the world.

It must have happened to nearly every man, in the course of a golfing career of any respectable length, to indulge in pleasant private speculation on the amazing result of adding together his lowest score for each hole of a course on which he is a constant player. It is a result which is frankly surprising, and no golfer of imagination can refrain from the attempt at realising what the effect on the golfing world would be if, just once in a lifetime, he were to happen to combine all these lowest possibles in one extraordinary round. Unhappily these combinations of eighteen holes do not occur, and the world has to satisfy itself with such sensations as it can extract from scores like that surprising one of 69 lately recorded, on the full course at St. Andrews, by Jack Kirkaldy. Surprising as that is, it is as nothing in comparison with the score which even a very moderate golfer who plays much on that or on any other eighteen-hole green can make up by taking the aggregate of his lowest scores at each hole. But though a combination of eighteen of these lowest possibles has never been recorded yet, some very remarkable series of three or four consecutive holes have been accomplished. The lowest score for four holes which the present writer ever heard of was

made by Mr. E. Balfour-Melville at St. Andrews, namely, nine for the last two holes of the outgoing half and the first two of the home-coming. The Short-Hole-Out he did in one, the End hole in three, the tenth in three, and the Short-Hole-In in three. This was not, however, I think, in a competition, but in one of those matches described as "friendly," when it did not much matter. On the same course Mr. McEwen also did a remarkable series of four holes—the last four—against Mr. H. W. Forster, and this, if I remember right, was in one of the annual handicap tournaments—I think the Calcutta Cup. The total score for the four holes was fourteen, made up of a three at each except the difficult seventeenth, at which he had a five. Before commencing this succession he was a hole or two down; at the end, as is not wonderful, he was up, and won the match. A yet more notable series of four, because made in an actual scoring competition, was recorded by Mr. S. H. Fry at Sandwich last year when playing for the St. George's Cup. He had a three at the fifth hole, a two at the "Maiden," a three again at the next, and again a two at "Hades." Yet, withal, he did not win, but was only just beaten. Probably this is the most remarkable series of holes ever recorded in a score competition. It is quite possible that more wonderful things even than these which are set down here have been done in the "friendly" match, and the world very likely might never hear of them—though it is improbable that the friends of the perpetrator would not have heard—but had any other feat so singular been done in a scoring competition it would almost certainly have found its way into the publicity of print—therefore into fame.

Considering the proportion of holes in most courses which can be reached with a single shot from the tee, it is curious how seldom a hole is done in one—how seldom the statutory fine of a bottle of whisky to the caddie has to be forfeited. But what happens if the player be a zealous teetotaler? About the caddie

we need not, perhaps, consider a contingency so remote. We all know the story—but it is good enough to bear repetition—of the man doing the ho'e up the cliff at Biarritz in one stroke and giving his caddie five francs. The green is out of sight from the tee, and on the following day twenty-seven men came in one after the other, each having done the hole in one, and each having given his caddie five francs. A comparison of their experiences suggested the sad suspicion that a small boy had been situated on the green of that hole with the object of putting into the hole any ball that came up at all near it, who then hid himself over the other cliff edge of the peninsula. But of holes genuinely done in one we hear wonderfully seldom. On the old North Berwick course, before its extension, some half of the holes might be reached in a single stroke, and some with quite a short stroke, and yet it was not often that a one was recorded. On one occasion, in a foursome, the late Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell and I in partnership did three holes consecutively in two each on that course. But the performance which has always seemed to me the most extraordinary of all, in its way, was that of Mr. R. de Zoete many years ago at the long hole at Blackheath. At that time—how it may be now with rubber-cored balls and the wearing away of the whins I do not know—this hole, one of the longest, if not the very longest, in golf, could very rarely be reached in three full shots; yet on one great occasion Mr. de Zoete actually holed it in three, with the third full shot holed out. Once, at Hoylake, playing for the medal, I holed, with a full iron shot, the old third hole in two, and managed to utilise the fluke to win the medal. But why do these nice things not happen more often? They are so very pleasant when they do.

#### THE LONDON AMATEUR FOURSOME TOURNAMENT.

AN interesting point about the arrangements for the London Amateur Foursome Tournament, designed to take the place of the tournament which was played last year with an amateur and a professional of each club in partnership, is that the clause is retained which permits different players to represent the same club in course of the tournament. Thus, in one of the matches last year the Walton Heath Club was represented by Mr. Bevan and Braid, although in most of the matches Mr. Fowler was Braid's partner. It is an arrangement which was much criticised last year, a good many of the censors maintaining that the same pair ought to be doing battle, as representatives of any one club, throughout. It is, however, very much more convenient that there should be this opportunity of bringing in another man, in case of illness or other circumstances preventing one, or even both, of the originally selected representatives taking part. In a tournament extending as this does over a considerable time, and especially where four players are required to make a match, it is only too likely that this might occur, and as long as the players are really representative of the clubs engaged it does not seem to matter if they are not always the same. Certainly it is a scheme which gives ease and elasticity, and prevents a club from being thrown out of the running altogether by the inability of one of its men to play.

The arrangements are in the joint hands of the Byfleet, Sunningdale, Walton Heath and Woking Clubs, with Mr. Colt as hon. secretary. The trophy of victory—the same, as we understand, that was won by Mr. Fry and Taylor last year, defeating Mr. Fowler and Braid in the final—becomes the property for the year not of the winning players, but of the club which they represent; but since there is a guinea entrance fee, it may, perhaps, be assumed that the entrance fees are intended to provide mementoes for the individual winners; and in order to ensure that the players shall be in some fairly genuine sense representative of the clubs for which they play it is enacted that they shall have been members of the club for at least six months previous to the date of the draw. Any club within forty miles of Charing Cross is eligible to compete, but the matches have to be played on the green of one or other of the clubs already named as managing the competition, and never on the home green of either of the parties to the match. The draw will take place on February 22nd, entries closing the previous day.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL FOURSOME TOURNAMENT.

The weather has treated the Professional Foursome Tournament rather badly. Some of the matches have been played on a frost-bitten surface, which makes accurate golf impossible, and the result much a matter of luck, and snow has followed the frost and put golf out of the range of practical politics for a while on many courses. The Cricketers' County Tournament also ought to be in full swing, but the swing of this is again checked by the weather, which is called seasonable. Taylor, who has gone linkscape gardening to Cairo, is to be congratulated. *A propos* of cricketing golfers and the remarks of "W. G." in *Fry's Magazine* about the golfer taking up cricket, it is curious that more reference has not been made to the chapter on that subject contributed long ago to the Badminton golf volume by the late Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell—perhaps second to "W. G." only in repute as a cricketer, and nearly a first-class golfer; in fact, with some claims to be called first-class.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

#### GOLFERS IN THE MAKING.

A VOLUME has just been published bearing the sonorous title "Great Golfers in the Making, being autobiographical accounts of the early progress of the most celebrated players, with reflections on the morals of their experience, edited, with an introduction, by Henry Leach." It contains twenty-four illustrations, and is issued by Methuen and Co. The articles in the volume are a reprint in book form of a series that lately appeared in a golf magazine. A careful examination of the articles raises at once the question on what principle of selection and exclusion the general body of

golfers are to be prevailed upon to accept the contributions as in any respect representative of the "great golfers" either of the present day or of the past. There are many names in the volume which all players will recognise as being entitled to bear the description "great," but there are others to which the wide constituency of golf, with its sound judgment and its sober critical faculty, will assuredly refuse to concede the claim of the "organiser and editor" of this volume. Every golfer will readily admit that skilled players and interesting writers like Mr. Low, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Hilton, Mr. Laidlay and the leading professionals have a right to claim the attentive ear of all other players when they handle, out of the fulness of their knowledge and experience, many of the perplexing problems of the game. But they will not willingly assent to the conferring of the dignity of "great" on some of the other contributors, nor will they concede that their playing reputation and experience of the game justify them, through the possibly well-meant policy of the "organiser and editor," in lecturing their fellow-golfers as to the true principles to be adopted either in driving or in putting. The whole conception and tone of the book are pitched in an erroneous, superlative key.

The classification of the "great golfers," moreover, is both invidious and misleading. If, as is stated, the object is to make the volume of permanent value to players, the selection of players should have been more carefully sifted, and it should have been made more thoroughly representative both of amateurs and of professionals. Surely the "lights of the younger school" are not exhausted by Mr. Cecil Hutchison, Mr. A. G. Barry, Mr. R. Harris, Mr. F. H. Scroggie and Mr. G. Wikie? Scarcely any of these contributors have a story to tell beyond the bare fact that they were born and learnt somehow or other to play the game. But it might have been otherwise with other amateurs of greater experience and knowledge, as well as of higher literary skill—men like Mr. Harold Beveridge, Mr. C. E. S. Everard, Mr. Macfie, Mr. Harold Reade, Mr. H. S. Colt, Mr. B. Darwin, Mr. R. H. de Montmorency, Mr. A. Mackenzie Ross, Mr. Robert Maxwell, Mr. Mure Fergusson, Mr. John Graham, Mr. William Greig, Mr. Charles Hutchings, Mr. F. Kinloch, Mr. A. C. Lincoln, Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville, Mr. F. H. Newnes, M.P., the Hon. Osmund Scott and many other "masters of golf" whose names will readily suggest themselves to golfers. Among the professionals, too, one would like to see some practical contributions from renowned players and teachers like Willie Fernie, Archie Simpson, Douglas Rolland and James Kay of Seaton Carew. To have obtained a few of these the reader would have willingly sacrificed the slip-slop trivialities of the "transatlantic champions."

The "moral" which the haphazard selection of these contributors have to tell has been the everyday commonplace of all players for generations. If the compiler had served a longer apprenticeship at the game than he has done he would have known that there was no "secret" of success which they could impart. The great golfer is born, not made by any fantastic adhesion to the methods of charlatanism. In the words of Bob Ferguson, a humble but very great golfer, "I believe good golfing is a gift," and Mr. J. R. Gairdner sums up the whole morality of a golfer's education in the one word "imitate." The contributors of these papers all bear testimony to the influence of good players in modelling their styles—Mr. Hutchinson and Taylor to the influence of the Allans, Willie Park and Mr. Laidlay to the influence of old Willie Park and Bob Ferguson. But the great secret of golfing success, as it is the secret of success in every pastime, is to begin young. In that respect the volume is rich in its copious testimony; and thereafter, as Braid pithily says, "study and practice and experience count for nearly everything in golf." Beyond that there is nothing of real value to be extracted from the volume. Nearly every contributor begins apologetically, in the words of the needy knife-grinder in the "Anti-Jacobin," "Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir." The book thus lapses too much into a "chronicle of small beer" based on the aggressive individual note, interesting enough for its details in a "Who's Who," but of no great intrinsic or permanent value for its educative counsel.

#### CHARTERED SURVEYORS GOLFING SOCIETY.

ONE of the tendencies of the time is for many of the sectional interests among our busy professional men to organise golf clubs which shall be representative of some particular profession. The Universities, the Bar, Lloyd's, the Solicitors, the Stock Exchange, the Church, the Medical Profession have all organised golfing societies confined to their own membership. According to a letter which we have received from Mr. S. James Chesterton, the hon. secretary of the Chartered Surveyors Golfing Society, an institution for the playing of the game has just been formed, the membership of which is restricted to members of the Surveyors Institution. The object is to arrange matches with societies of the kindred professions, and the holding of an annual tournament is under consideration. It has been hitherto the privilege of all golfing societies to earn a great deal of success and no little distinction through the effect they have had in improving the play of their members; and there is no reason to doubt that this society just formed will carry out a useful work in spreading a knowledge of the game and its worthiest traditions.

A. J. ROBERTSON.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

## SIZE OF OAK LEAVES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I picked up the enclosed oak leaf in my garden some weeks ago. It measured 10in. by about 6½in. No doubt it came from a tree I had pollarded—that always seems to increase the size of the leaves.—F. L. MAWDESLKY.

[The oak leaf is certainly of abnormal size, if it be that of the common oak, which, despite the bluntness of its lobes, as well as its unusual size, we are inclined to think it is. Of course, it is quite impossible to speak positively from a single leaf, as dissimilar ones can often be selected from the same tree. We have met with leaves on the American white oak (*Quercus alba*) almost, if not quite, identical with the one sent, though, as a rule, the lobes are more deeply cut. The strong shoots usually pushed out from pollarded trees often bear leaves of unusual size, a feature also frequently to be found in young seedling plants that are growing freely.—ED.]

## A FROST EFFECT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph taken in my garden near Bath. On the night of Tuesday, January 22nd, the fountain was accidentally left on, and the strong wind blew the spray on to the maple tree, where it froze; the weight of the ice then bore the tree down. The whole effect was produced in one night.—E. A. HICK, Wayfield, Batheaston.

## FROZEN FOAM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There has been so much in the way of comparison between this year's frost and that of 1895 that it occurs to me the enclosed photograph may possibly be of interest. It is a picture I took of the shore at Ryde in that year, showing the frozen foam as it appeared between the tides.—W. G. W.

## A BIRD-TABLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Could one of your correspondents let me know how to make a bird-table, and what food (how prepared), and should it be protected from the rain? —A. C.

[Set up a stake (iron or wood) a little out of the perpendicular. Cut a cocoanut in half, and suspend it with the opening downwards from the top of the stake by 6in. of string. When the cocoanut is finished put suet or fat inside in its place. We may also refer our correspondent to page 839 in our issue of December 8th, 1906.—ED.]

## THE MOVEMENTS OF BIRDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During the past fortnight this locality of Scotland has been visited by



flocks of chaffinches and red finches (the latter locally better known as red or rose linnets) which cannot certainly be computed by less than thousands. At first the chaffinches seemed to be the more numerous, but latterly the reverse has been the case, the red linnets greatly preponderating. The two kinds congregate in one immense flock, and have been chiefly frequenting an extensive wood composed almost entirely of beech trees, where they appear to

be finding some kind of food among the mast and leaves which cover the ground. It of course seems probable that this visitation has some connection with the exceptionally hard winter, especially abroad, and perhaps some of your readers may be able to give instances of similar flocks in years gone by. If we are to suppose, as seems reasonable, that such flocks are now scattered over the whole country, the immensity of the numbers is almost incredible. It would be interesting to know whence these birds come, especially the red linnets. What they could be finding to eat also in such a place as described is to me an equal mystery.—P. R. BAIRNSFATHER (LIEUT.-COLONEL), New Hall, Coupar Angus, N.B.

## MOTOR FIRE-ENGINES.

[TO THE EDITOR]

SIR,—In view of the many fires that take place unchecked in remote country places, I would suggest to Parish Councils the advisability of clubbing together and keeping a motor fire-engine at the nearest town. Eight or ten miles can now be traversed in as short a space of time as the old horse engine would have taken over two miles, and much loss of ricks, cottages and big houses would be prevented. At present the fire too often has to be allowed to burn until there is nothing left to be saved but the ground. Where ricks are crowded together the fire could very often be easily confined to one, or where a conflagration has begun in some old historic mansion, it should be possible, with a good engine on the scene within half-an-hour of the outbreak, to save much of the building with its contents and priceless pictures and other heirlooms which could never be replaced. Only the other day, in the late wintry weather, I heard of a horse-drawn engine taking three hours to reach a fire over some eight miles of road.—R.

## A MOCK SUN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—My attention has only just been drawn to Lady Theodora Guest's letter in *COUNTRY LIFE* of January 12th, recording the appearance of a mock sun on the afternoon of Friday, January 4th. You may be interested to know that it was clearly seen here, the lower part of the arc having the appearance of a small portion of a very bright rainbow for a short time, the upper part of the arc being colourless.—L. FLORENCE RIDLEY, Charminster, Dorset.

## THE CANAL BARGE IN WINTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose you a photograph taken on the Grand Junction Canal near Berkhamsted on January 25th last. The bargee works hard at all times, and is generally the last to yield to the conditions of the weather. He generally owns the horse, mule or donkey that hauls the barge. If ice compels the latter to be laid up, the animal is eating its head off while its master is earning nothing.—J. T. N.



## CAT TAKING TO WATER

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Knowing that COUNTRY LIFE welcomes a note of anything abnormal in animal life, I beg to call your attention to what I consider to be a remarkable instance of the reversal of the natural habits of cats. At Wroxham, Norfolk, about 200yds. above the railway bridge, is an eel-fisher's house-boat, the owner of which (a certain Nob Cox) possesses a tailless black and white tom cat. This animal has for years of its own free will regularly swum



LONG-EARED OWL.

part of the cat, though such cases have been reported on more than one occasion.—ED.]

## BREED OF A TERRIER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers tell me about a dog. I have come across one the size of a fox-terrier; he has a woolly, sheep-looking coat, and has the head of a sheepdog—a beautiful little head; I believe he is a wonderfully game dog, and a great sportsman in every way. The countryman who owns him tells me he has been told that there is only one other dog like him in England. If we could find a mate for him we would be delighted; this dog is twelve years old.—F. F.

## THE LONG-EARED OWL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Long-eared owls are usually found in plantations composed of spruce, larch and Scotch fir. I have never come across them in woods unless there were fir trees in clumps. They generally have full clutches of from four to six eggs about the end of March, but some are as late as April 10th. They nearly always select an old nest of the crow, magpie or sparrow-hawk to deposit their eggs in. I have never found the squirrel's nest utilised, and I do not think they would lay their eggs in it unless the top was removed or the nest flattened down. A wood-pigeon's nest is never used, as it is much too small. I have never known this owl to nest on the ground. As soon as nesting-time arrives, the male bird ruffles up his feathers, paddles with his feet and coos rather like a wood-pigeon does. I suppose it is to make himself attractive to the female. A tap at a tree containing a nest will generally cause the female owl to fly off. The male is perched somewhere near the nest, and is the first to take alarm and fly away. They have one brood in a season; the young begin to leave the nest when about five weeks old and sit on the side of the nest at first, and as they grow stronger and begin to fly short distances they perch on the branches. They can fly very well when seven weeks old: and can lay the tufts of feathers called ears quite flat—they do so when eating. Small birds and mice are their principal food, and they like to pull their prey to pieces, but sometimes they swallow small mice whole. A curious thing about these owls is that I never find any remains of food in their nest during the time the young are there. Do these owls digest the food for the young? They evidently do not tear the food in the nest before feeding their young. If the eggs be taken they have another clutch in three weeks, and if the second laying is also taken they lay another clutch three weeks after, sometimes in the same nest, as in the case I experimented with. This was an old magpie's nest in a tall larch in a fir plantation,



LONG-EARED OWL AND MOUSE.

and each time four eggs were laid every three weeks. The last laying only produced two eggs, which were hatched about the latter part of June, and the young reared.—T. A. METCALFE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Last Easter I procured two young long-eared owls and tamed them a little. After returning from school I find they are quite wild, and so am anxious to get rid of them. Could you tell me whether, if let loose in a pine wood where others of their kind are known to breed, they would be able to feed themselves? When taken from the nest they could not fly, and had none of their proper feathers.—B.

[One can never tell for certain, but we think it would be safe. Unless the pine wood is of considerable extent, the others which breed there would probably hunt the newcomers away, but they would in all likelihood manage to shift for themselves. If the wood is near the house it would be kind to continue for a time to put food out for them close to the accustomed feeding-place. Escaped or liberated owls frequently return at night to their cages in search of food, and regular supplies for a while might just tide them over their hard times. You would soon see whether they were taking a advantage of your catering or not.—ED.]



EATING HIS PREY.

## BIRDS SHAMMING DEATH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of January 26th I notice a letter from Mr. Hookham about a bird shamming death, and asking if anybody else has come across a similar instance. I myself saw an almost identical case a year or so ago in our own house which we have now left. I was in our maid's room talking, when we both heard my old tabby Persian cat coming upstairs with the peculiar muffled "mow-wow" that meant a prize of some sort. He appeared with a fine cock sparrow that he had managed somehow to catch. Both the maid and I thought the bird was quite dead; his head was dangling limply, his eyes were half shut and one wing was trailing. Jimmy, the cat, laid his capture at our feet with pride. I was just going to pick the bird up, when he shot up and flew straight out of the window, which was wide open. He had evidently not been hurt in the least by the cat, who was so furious at his capture escaping that he nearly went out of the window, too. It was a clear case of the sparrow "playing possum," and we have often laughed over the old cat's discomfiture. I thought perhaps your correspondent might be interested in hearing his own experience confirmed by an almost identical case. I have also known small trout do exactly the same thing when my mother and I have been fishing in the little Exmoor streams. A fish that is too small to keep, and has only been lightly hooked, has been put back into the water at once. As long as my mother held her hand near him in the shallow water, he lay limp and lifeless; the minute the hand was removed he was off like a flash.—M. C. E. WHITEHORNE.

## BLUE TITS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Two of your correspondents speak of the scarcity of blue tits and nuthatches. I write to say that blue tits abound here, and we have a pair of nuthatches living in our garden, while there are others in the neighbourhood. During the recent week of snow one of our nuthatches came regularly every day to the verandah to feed with the other birds. He always seemed in a desperate hurry, and would snatch up one or two pieces of bread in his bill and fly away with them to a tree not far off, returning very soon for more. He was also passionately fond of the sunflower seeds which I had put out for the blue tits, and carried them all away, one or two at a time; he did not show the slightest fear of us. Though the snow has long since disappeared, he still comes regularly to the verandah to be fed.—IDA NORMAN, Worcester.